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PART XXI.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. February 1878.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART XXI.

No. 1.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1878.)

(No. 131. Political.)

Erzeroum, December 8, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is with deep regret I have to report that the unceasing demands of the Government for money and articles of food from the people of this province, aided by the exaction of the irregulars, and the robberies of the hundreds of petty officials who have been spread over the country, have at last brought starvation in their train, and famine has already commenced in this town, and in some of the districts.

Not being able to credit the reports that there were hundreds of families, Mussulman and Christian, in this town, literally starving, the American missionaries have been personally inspecting the different quarters, and they assure me that the reports are, unhappily, but too true, and that, if extraneous aid does not speedily come, the deaths from starvation will very soon become numerous.

Food is still procurable in this neighbourhood, but high prices place it far beyond the reach of the poorer classes. It is sufficient to state that bran, which is now very scarce, is dearer in price by at least 50 per cent. than what the best wheat flour was last winter. Such being the rise in this staple article, it can be well imagined what the rise in all other articles of the first necessity has been.

Money is what the poor of this town and neighbourhood require, to enable them to buy food and a little fuel; if it is not supplied, cold and hunger will very soon leave hundreds of houses tenantless.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 2.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1878.)

(No. 51. Political.)

Salonica, December 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of the 17th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting the punishment of the officers and men who attempted to violate the French Post-office at Volo; the promulgation of the Firman, which has reference to the military service of Christians and Jews; and that no disturbance had taken place here during the Feast of Bairam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Salonica, December 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Kaïmakam of Volo was in time to prevent the violation of the French Post-office, attempted on the 30th ultimo by the Bimbashi commanding the troops, another officer, and some soldiers, the object of which was to obtain possession of the newspapers from Greece, and prevent their circulation. Mr. Vice-Consul Suter now informs me, under date the 13th instant, that, by orders received at Volo from the Mushir commanding the forces in the vilayet of Janina, the Bimbashi who ordered, and the officer and soldiers who executed, the attempted violence, were tried by court-martial, and sentenced the officers to three months' detention in the Citadel at Volo, and the soldiers to forty days.

The new Governor of Larissa, Ahmet Faizee Pasha, who has shown so much energy in repressing disorders since his arrival, has tendered his resignation, which has been accepted by the Porte, and he has left Larissa to embark at Volo for Constantinople. Petitions have been signed, and are going to be sent to the Porte, in the hope they may lead to his re-appointment to the Governorship of Thessaly.

Yesterday a Firman was read and published here in the Salonica "Gazette," permitting the enrolment of Christians and Jews for military service as Civic Guards, and in the local Gendarmerie Corps. I hear from Mr. Suter that the same has taken place at Larissa, and that several Christians and two or three Jews have come forward to be enrolled, the pay being 100 piastres a month, with the daily ration of half an oke of bread, and clothing.

The despatch of 36,000 kilog. of tithe wheat to Janina from Tricala, where they have been stored, has been ordered by the Porte; but as their carriage would require 9,000 animals, and the pass at Meztovo is impracticable at this season from snow, it is probable this grain will be sent to Volo, and there be shipped for Prevesa; and thus trade will not suffer by the monopoly of all means of traffic for so long a time as the carriage to Janina by land would entail on the public.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

December 19.

P.S.—The Courban Bairam feast has passed off without any disturbance.
E. B. B. B.

No. 3.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1878.)

(No. 589. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 31, 1877.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Russians are advancing in force on Sofia, and that the military authorities have called upon the civil population of the town to leave it.

There are only about 30 battalions there, which are not considered sufficient for the defence of the place. The force at Kamarli, which consists of about 40 battalions, has been ordered to fall back, and it is hoped that it will be in time to do so.

The position of military affairs in Western Roumelia is not satisfactory.

No. 4.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1878.)

(No. 590.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 31, 1878.

DR. STEVENS, Chief Surgeon of Stafford House Hospital at Rustchuk, telegraphs to me that on 29th, during artillery fire from both sides, Russian battery near Menchikoff Church fired eight shots at the hospital, two of which struck it, killing one man and wounding five. One ward, containing fifty-four beds, was entirely destroyed. Next day

the same battery, and that at the end of the Giurgevo, had directed about thirty shots at the hospital, of which seven struck the wards and three the office. The patients were removed, and nobody was wounded. Two Red Crescent flags, which always fly on the hospital, were waved on both occasions, but the Russians took (no?) notice of them. The hospital is about 2 kilom. from the town, and there is no battery near it nor in a line with it. The surgeons had believed themselves safe under the protection of international stipulations, but the danger to which they and their patients are exposed by the Russians' breach of the Convention, obliges them to remove their patients elsewhere.

Dr. Stevens begs that the attention of the parties to the Convention may be called to these facts.

No. 5.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1878.)

(No. 593.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 31, 1877.

PORTE is about to issue a Circular notifying that blockade of Albanian coast is reduced to a simple closing of the ports from Spizza to mouth of Boyana. Vessels not laden with contraband of war will be warned off on arrival. Contraband will be seized.

No. 6.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1878.)

(Telegraphic.) *Ragusa, December* 31, 1877.

AUSTRIAN ironclad "Don Juan" and a gun-boat have sailed for Antivari to embark non-combatant Albanian population.

No. 7.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)

(No. 2. Most Confidential.)
Paris, January 1, 1878.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship will not have forgotten the earnestness with which the Duc Decazes, from time to time while he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, represented that if the forces of England should be occupied in the East, Prince Bismarck would seize the opportunity in order to make aggressions in the West.

In making these representations, the Duc Decazes was no doubt actuated, in great measure, by strong partisanship for Russia, and by the desire to prevent her being interfered with by England; but I suppose he really thought that France, if not Holland, might be in some danger if the forces of England, as well as those of Russia, were so occupied as to leave the field clear in Western Europe for any designs which Prince Bismarck might entertain.

M. Waddington approached the same subject in rather a different way yesterday.

Speaking to me most confidentially, he said that it was all important to France that England and Russia should not be involved in hostilities. He was, he added, most anxious that France should not be left *tête-à-tête* with Prince Bismarck, whether his Highness played the part of an enemy or of a tempter. In either character his Highness might be dangerous, although the French Government would, M. Waddington declared, be honest, and be firm in rejecting all suggestions that France should aggrandize herself at the expense of her neighbours.

M. Waddington remarked that the prospects of the Exhibition of 1878 gave France a special reason for desiring the cessation of war; but that a more urgent consideration with the French Government was the danger of other Powers becoming involved in the war in the East, if it went on much longer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 8.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)

Vienna, January 1, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)
THE Emperor sent the Golden Fleece this morniug to Count Andrassy, accompanied, I am told, by a most flattering message from His Majesty.

No. 9.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)

Odessa, January 2, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)
VESSEL mentioned in my telegram of the 24th ultimo will start again hence to-morrow or next day. Captain is confident he can capture iron-clad if met alone.

No. 10.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)

(No. 592.)
Constantinople, January 2, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)
REPETITION of telegram of the 31st.

Consul Green telegraphs:—

"Irregulars who have not yet deserted have now returned from front to Scutari on the ground that they are unable to resist the severity of the weather.

"Authorities have found it prudent not to persist in opposing their return homewards.

"Montenegrins are ravaging the country around Dulcigno and near Boyana.

No. 11.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, 1878.)

(No. 500.)
Berlin, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,
RECENT events in England have called forth an immeasurable quantity of articles in the German and Berlin press, none of which, however, convey a very correct idea of the spirit which animates the policy of Her Majesty's Government.

The only noteworthy fact is, that the papers which are supposed, rightly or wrongly, to enjoy official inspiration, assume that England is preparing to occupy Egypt, and that France must then necessarily take possession of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 12.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3.)

Belgrade, January 3, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)
A DECREE abolishes certain existing regulations on the subject of trade with Turkey, on the plea that Servia is now a sovereign independent State. Further measures expected to accomplish such situation, with a view to make it a *fait accompli*.

No. 13.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

Foreign Office, January 3, 1878, 5·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
CAPTAIN THACKERAY, of the Lanarkshire militia, who had gone as a spectator to the front, is believed to have been taken prisoner by the Russian forces at Tashkesen.

Please endeavour to ascertain and procure his release.

No. 14.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, January 3, 1878, 6·15 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
YOUR telegram No. 590, respecting Russian fire on hospitals, has been repeated to Lord A. Loftus, with instructions to bring matter to notice of Russian Government.

No. 15.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, January 3, 1878, 6·25 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
FOLLOWING telegram, dated December 31, received from Mr. Layard; and I have to instruct you to bring the matter to the notice of the Russian Government:—

"Dr. Stevens, Chief Surgeon of Stafford House Hospital, at Rustchuk, telegraphs to me that on the 29th, during artillery fire from both sides, Russian battery near Menchikoff Church fired eight shots at the hospital, two of which struck it, killing one man and wounding five. One ward, containing fifty-four beds, was entirely destroyed. Next day the same battery, and that at the end of the Giurgevo road, directed about thirty shots at the hospital, of which seven struck the wards, and three the office. The patients was removed, and nobody was wounded. Two Red Crescent flags, which always fly on the hospital, were waved on both occasions, but Russians took (no?) notice of them. The hospital is about two kilometres from the town, and there is no battery near it nor in a line with it. The surgeons had believed themselves safe under the protection of international stipulations; but the danger to which they and their patients are exposed by the Russians' breach of the Convention obliges them to remove their patients elsewhere.

"Dr. Stevens begs that the attention of the parties to the Convention may be called to these facts."

No. 16.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 1.)
Foreign Office, January 3, 1878.

Sir,
I APPROVE the steps taken by you, as reported in your despatches Nos. 360 and 361 of the 17th ultimo, with regard to the communication to the Hellenic Government of the information contained in my telegram of the 15th ultimo, with a view to strengthen their hands in the prevention of insurrectionary movements in Crete.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 17.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 2.)
Foreign Office, January 3, 1878.

Sir,
WITH reference to your despatch No. 358, Confidential, of the 17th ultimo, I have to express to you my approval of your having suggested to Admiral Hornby that it might

* A similar telegram was addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

be desirable, under existing circumstances, that no British vessel of war should be stationed at the Piræus.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 18.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 4, 1878.)

(No. 50. Political.)

Adrianople, December 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a despatch with its inclosure which I have to-day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the dismissal by Ahmed Vefik Pasha, late Governor-General of Adrianople, of Saïd Aga, Kaïmakam of Tchirpan, and other public functionaries in this vilayet, and their indictment for corrupt practices.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 18.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, December 16, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the satisfaction to state that Saïd Aga, whose arbitrary conduct I reported to your Excellency in my despatch of the 7th August last, has been dismissed from the office of Kaïmakam of Tchirpan, by Ahmed Vefik Pasha, the late Governor-General of Adrianople, shortly before his Excellency was recalled from here.

I inclose a report on the subject from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert of Philippopolis. I am told that Saïd Aga has been summoned to Constantinople to give an account of his administration.

Other members of the provincial administration have also been dismissed at the instance of Ahmed Vefik Pasha, and are now rendering an account of their evil practices. Among them I may mention Hazmadar-zadeh Mehmed Effendi, the chief clerk of the Temizi Hukouk (Criminal Court) of Adrianople, and who also at the same time acted in a similar capacity at the Court Martial here. He is accused of taking bribes from persons under trial, and he has been put under arrest.

Izzet Bey, the Mutesarif (Lieutenant-Governor), and Fakhri Effendi, the Mal-Mudiri (Chief Receiver of the Revenue) of the province of Rodosto, were also both suspended from their respective offices by Ahmed Vefik Pasha under the implication of corrupt practices. A special Commission is now inquiring into their conduct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 18.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopoli, December 2, 1877.

Sir,

I AM happy to report to you that Saïd Agha, the Turkish Magnate of Tchirpan, who was last spring made Kaïmakam of that district, and whose arbitrariness and rapacity, both before and after his nomination to that post, I have several times had occasion to bring to your notice, has just been superceded.

His successor is a certain Suleiman Agha, of Sistova.

On the eve of his dismissal Saïd Agha arrested, on a charge of sedition, three Bulgarian traders of Tchirpan, and telegraphed to Suleiman Pasha at Shumla, accusing them of sedition, and asking what he should do with them. Suleiman Pasha, in reply, instructed him to send the prisoners to Philippopoli for trial, which he did.

Their examination by the Court-martial under Rifaat Pasha brought to light the fact, his Excellency informs me, that a considerable sum of money was due to them by Saïd Agha. At the same time their answers under examination were such as to convince the

Tribunal of their innocence. The prisoners were, however, sent to Constantinople the day before yesterday, in order, I am given to understand, that they should make personal complaint, before a superior tribunal, of their treatment at the hands of Saïd Agha. The minutes of their examination were forwarded to Constantinople the same day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 19.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 4, 1878.)

(No. 74. Political.)

Trebizond, December 17, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that on Tuesday last the Greek Monastery of Sumela, situated at ten hours' distance from this in the direction of Gumushané, was plundered by a band of eighteen Turks.

This monastery, which was founded, tradition says, so far back as the year 386 A.D., during the reign of Theodosius, and enlarged at later periods by the Byzantine Emperors, is situated in a lonely place, but in an almost inaccessible position. It is in high repute among the Christians owing to its possessing, besides the miraculous image of the Virgin, to which it owes its foundation, a piece of the true Cross. It is also held in reverence by the Mussulmans, many of whom, at least 500 yearly, go there in pilgrimage with important offerings in kind and money. It contains valuable ornaments and *ex votos* of silver, gold, and precious stones, the latter, however, of no very high price, which have accumulated since fifteen centuries.

The monastery is inhabited by twelve monks and three servants. In the afternoon of Tuesday last two Turks and two women knocked at the door, which is always kept closed, and asked admittance.

The door-keeper introduced them after the men had, as usual, handed in their arms through the wicket; the two supposed women, who were men in disguise, threw open their veils, drew their arms, and took possession of the door, which was invaded at once by fourteen other Turks who lay concealed in the immediate vicinity. They rushed to the chapel where the monks were congregated and fired their maskets, which were loaded only with blank cartridges. Of course the monks, old men, for the most part, could offer no resistance. They were told to give up their treasure, the Giaours (Russians) being at Erzeroum, and shortly coming down.

It is evident that the object of the robbers was to obtain money, of which they thought that the monks were well provided. But having discovered only about 50*l.* in coin, they carried away six watches and all the wearing apparel belonging to the monks, as well as the following property of the monastery: 5 small silver crosses, 17 small candlesticks, 2 chalices, 2 censers, 2 out of 6 silver trays which were piled together, several embroidered church vestments, 10 okes of out-of-use silver ornaments, 80 oakes of old copper vessels. To these spoils they added cheese, butter, and bread.

Their not having touched any of the silver and gold ornaments studded with precious stones, which adorn the images, especially that of the Holy Virgin, can be accounted for by the fact that the Mussulmans in this province reverence the shrine of Meïrem Ana, the name under which the monastery is known among them. One of the plunderers having attempted to lay hands on the image of the Virgin, the others, struck with superstitious awe, prevented him from so doing, one of the gang even threatening him with a cutlass should he not desist from his intention.

But odd enough they spared more valuable objects of the kind of those they carried away, and which were at their discretion, such as pure gold chalice, crosses with precious stones, large silver candlesticks, &c. The Christians detect in this fact a miracle of the Virgin of Sumela.

The value of all the objects stolen, half of which were private property of the monks, is about 400*l.* The richly embroidered church vestments are not included in this sum, they being more priced as relics of the past than for the intrinsic value they represent. The monks value them upwards of 1,000*l.*

The robbers struck the monks with the butt end of their muskets in order to make them disclose their supposed treasure. However, besides the Superior, who seems to have been rather severely handled, and is said to lie in a precarious condition, the others have escaped almost unhurt.

Among the plunderers was a Turk, supposed to be a deserter, he wearing the uniform

of a soldier, and being armed with a breech-loading rifle; he seems to have used his influence on his companions to prevent the monks from being more ill-treated, and the monastery further despoiled.

Energetic measures have been adopted by the local authorities for the recovery of the stolen property, and the apprehension of the robbers; and as the plunder of the monastery has excited public indignation throughout the province, it is expected that sooner or later this object will be attained.

I avail myself of this opportunity to mention that about a week before the Greek Church of the village of Pitsima was broken in at night, and plundered of its contents, valued exclusively at from 200*l.* to 300*l.*

The perpetrators of this deed have not shown the same respect for images as did those at Sumela.

A few Turks were arrested under suspicion, but they managed to escape in the night, and it is likely that nothing more will be heard on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 20.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1878.)

(No. 80. Political.)

Canea, Crete, December 22, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 78 of the 15th instant I had the honour to inform your Lordship that a great meeting of Christians was to be held in the village of Frè, in Apokorona. That meeting took place on the following day, and the Committee has been sitting there ever since. Ten delegates from each sub-district of this half of the island have proceeded thither, the town of Rethymo having even sent delegates of its own to represent the townspeople. The fact of these representatives having been publicly elected by the people under the eyes of the authorities conveys some idea of the state of feebleness to which the Government is reduced. The meeting in Rethymo was convened by the Bishop in the principal church, and seven of the most respectable Christians were chosen and sent forth on their mission. The instructions they received were the following:—

1. That they must insist on obtaining the demands put forth by the last two General Assemblies, and remain assembled until those demands are granted.

2. That the Christians must give no reason to the Mussulmans to complain of their conduct.

3. That they are to assist in appointing a police force, charged with the duty of preserving order and of putting down robbery and disorder.

A central village was chosen for carrying out the elections of the delegates for the three western subdistricts of Kissamos, Selino, and Kydonia (Canea). The thirty men elected on this occasion, who have since joined the Committee at Frè, addressed a letter to my colleagues of France and Greece and to myself, in which they assured us that in thus assembling they were far from harbouring any designs against their Moslem fellow-countrymen, whose interests were identical with their own, and further declaring that they were bound in self-defence to take steps for putting down robbery and disorder by appointing a police of their own.

In spite of the protestations of the Christians that they will do nothing to the detriment of the Moslems, the latter have taken the alarm. At Rethymo, as I am informed by the Vice-Consul, the Mussulman villagers began flocking into the town a week ago. At first the authorities shut the gates against them, but the stream of fugitives became so great, the men being all armed, that the Mutessarif Pasha thought it prudent to admit them, and their admission created a certain terror among the Christians. During the last few days a similar movement is taking place here, though on a smaller scale; nevertheless there is a constant flow of these poor creatures, who are running away from an imaginary danger, as there can be no doubt that the reports given out by the Committee is, that the persons and properties of the Mussulmans are to be respected.

The noted Chief, Haji Michali, whose departure from Greece had been telegraphed ten days ago, landed in this bay on the 20th instant, within sight of Canea. He was accompanied by fifteen or twenty followers, and brought with him several hundred rifles and about 100 cases of ammunition. He was no sooner landed, than, as if by a previously concerted signal, more than 100 men, with mules and asses, were on the beach to receive him, and all the warlike stores were rapidly carried off to the mountains. Haji Michali at

once repaired to his village of Lakos, where he was welcomed by his people, but told in unmistakable terms that they would not abet him in any insurrectionary designs. It becomes more and more apparent, indeed, that the inhabitants in this part of the country are disinclined for any hostile movement, being anxious for the advent of spring before embarking on a course of hostilities. They know that their families would be exposed to cruel sufferings if forced to take to the mountains in mid-winter. This circumstance is of some moment, as, if an insurrection is staved off, it will afford a chance of an understanding being come to with the Imperial Commissioners, whose arrival is daily expected.

Haji Michali was the bearer of a letter to the Cretans, written by an influential countryman of theirs, who has made his fortune in Athens. He tells them that they shall receive more guns and ammunition, and even money, and advises them to demand the annexation of the islands to Greece; but if they are not unanimous in that wish (as they undeniably are not) to demand what they consider the best for their interests, urging them in any case to be of the same mind.

There is certainly no enthusiasm at present for annexation to Greece—another circumstance which is favourable to the success of the mission intrusted to Kostaki Adossides Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 21.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1878.)

(No. 203. Political.)

Belgrade, December 28, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of the 26th December, on the subject of the Austrian declaration at Belgrade, I am informed that the Servian Minister for Foreign Affairs was desirous to learn the precise limitation of frontier of Bosnia, and also Herzegovina, with regard to which Prince Milan was to abstain from military operations; but the Austrian Agent was without instructions on this point. Competent persons formerly told me that Novi-Bazar would not be allowed to become Servian, but it is not improbable now that Prince Milan will make attempt to occupy the town and the district of that name.

Though even actual occupation does not prejudice future definitive arrangements, still the above exclusion of certain provinces, combined with the language of Russia here, is interpreted as signifying that Austria has become reconciled to the idea of Servian progress, provided this be not done in a particular direction.

Such concession to Russian views in favour of Servia by the Cabinet of Vienna was deemed quite lately impossible at Pesth, and indicates that the limit of ultimate yielding in that direction may not yet be thought entirely exhausted. The absence of all allusion to independence pretended to by this Principality is likewise construed in a sense highly favourable to Servian plans.

With regard to Austrian views as to two provinces, these will not be fully known until Russian plans respecting Bulgaria are entirely developed, and they will probably continue quiet in the meantime.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 22.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4.)

(No. 3.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 3, 1878.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informs me that Shakir Pasha has succeeded in effecting retreat to Ishakli.

After stormy debate in the Chamber on the answer to the Sultan's speech, a paragraph expressing want of confidence in Ministers was carried.

No. 23.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 4, 1878.*

THE Turkish Ambassador has just communicated to me a telegram from the Porte stating that the Turkish forces will probably be compelled to evacuate Sophia, and will be unable to remove 500 sick and wounded now there without exposing them to certain death in this weather. The Turkish Commanders have been instructed to come to an understanding with the Russian Generals as to the care of these patients. The Porte appeals to our humanity to address the Russian Government in order to obtain the best treatment possible for those who may fall into their hands.

I have promised that Her Majesty's Government will do what they can in the matter, and shall be obliged by your representing it to Prince Gortchakow.

No. 24.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 1506. Very Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 22, 1877.*

PRINCE REUSS, in the course of a conversation on the present state of affairs here, thought fit to condemn in very strong terms the appeal for mediation made by the Porte to the Powers, which he was good enough to attribute to my advice. His Highness observed that Russia would not listen to it. She had made war alone upon Turkey, and with Turkey alone she would make peace. If the Sultan, therefore, wished the war to end, he had only to address himself directly to the Emperor of Russia. Germany would not have accepted a mediation between herself and France. Nor would any independent Power be disposed to do so. England was pushing the Turks on to war. She would gain nothing by it. Turkey was exhausted. If she continued to fight she would have in the end, after a further enormous sacrifice of life and treasure, to accept such terms as Russia chose to impose upon her, whether England liked it or not. England had made a great show last summer; she had sent some ships to Besika Bay and a few hundred men to Malta. But nothing came of it. Events which your Lordship had declared would affect British interests, and would not be viewed with indifference by England, had already happened and had been quietly accepted. Your Lordship would doubtless find a way of reconciling anything else that Russia might do with British interests. His Highness was, therefore, of opinion that England was only misleading the Turks by inducing them to believe that she was prepared to resist any terms, whatever they might be, which Russia would impose upon Turkey.

All this, and a good deal more to the same effect, was said in that sneering tone which Prince Reuss usually adopts when he speaks of England. I answered him that, although I did not consider myself responsible for the appeal for mediation addressed by the Porte to the Powers, I could not but approve of it as a step entirely in accordance with the Treaty of Paris, which had not hitherto, as far as I knew, been formally abrogated. I could not admit, I said, his analogy between the war between Germany and France and that between Russia and Turkey. The former arose from questions at issue between the two belligerents alone, and no other Power not directly affected by the result had a right to intervene. But the present war was waged by Russia, so she herself had declared, as the "mandataire" of the Powers signatories of the Treaty of Paris, which had been entered into by them for the purpose of protecting Turkey from aggression on the part of Russia. That Treaty was still in force, and until it had been set aside it was incumbent upon the Porte to appeal to the Parties to it when her independence and integrity, which it had guaranteed, were threatened. If the Powers refused to acknowledge the Treaty, and to listen to her appeal, it would then be for Turkey to consider whether or not she should address herself directly to Russia, and accept such terms as Russia might impose upon her. But I added, that he was very little acquainted with the spirit and feeling of the English people if he thought that they would accept with quiet resignation any arrangement which might seriously affect the interests and dignity of the British Empire. To encourage Russia to exact from Turkey concessions which would be prejudicial to those interests was not rendering her good service. The Emperor Nicholas had made the fatal mistake of believing those who told him that England had fallen so low that she was ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of peace. The Crimean war was the result.

I have merely reported this private conversation to your Lordship to show the hostile

feelings which Prince Reuss entertains towards England, and the manner in which he advocates the policy and interests of Russia. In fact, since he has been here, he has been as much the Ambassador of Russia as of Germany.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 25.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 1507.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 24, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose translation of the Encyclical letter of the Greek Œcumenical Patriarch calling upon the subjects of the Sultan professing the Greek faith to answer to His Majesty's appeal to enroll themselves in the civic guard for the defence of the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 25.

Newspaper Extract.

L'ARMÉE TERRITORIALE.—Voici la traduction textuelle de la lettre Encyclique du Patriarche Œcuménique qui a été envoyée hier à toutes les églises Grecques de la capitale et de la banlieue. La lecture de cette Encyclique n'a pu être faite que dans quelques-unes des églises :—

"Nous, Joachim, Archevêque de Constantinople, nouvelle Rome, et Patriarche Œcuménique, à tous les très estimés clériçaux de notre Grande-Église en Jesus Christ, à tous les très pieux prêtres et très vénérés moines, aux chantres des saintes églises de la ville de Galata et de notre détroit, et à tous les autres Chrétiens bénis, nos enfants chéris en Jesus Christ. Que Dieu vous accorde la grâce et la paix.

"Par la communication officielle de notre respectable Gouvernement Impérial, publiée dernièrement dans la presse locale, il est certainement porté à la connaissance des bénis Orthodoxes Chrétiens, répandus par tout l'Empire, qu'il a été décidé, en vertu du haut Iradé Impérial, que tous les sujets non-Musulmans, qui ont l'âge prescrit par le règlement spécial de l'armée territoriale (Epihorios stratos) de récente création, destinée au maintien de la tranquillité et de la sécurité dans les localités respectives, soient admis et inscrits dans ses bataillons.

"Cette décision de notre haut Gouvernement, nous a été particulièrement communiquée par un *teshéré* de son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Son Excellence nous assure que Sa Majesté Impériale, notre très auguste Souverain, considérant d'un œil de justice égale tous ses sujets, et inspiré du sentiment louable pour que tous partagent l'honneur de la défense de leur patrie, a promulgué l'Iradé susmentionné, en appréciant hautement par cette nouvelle preuve de ses bonnes intentions en faveur de tous ses sujets, les efforts patriotiques prodigués dans les circonstances actuelles extraordinaires par chacune des classes de la population, et en exprimant en même temps sa conviction que les sujets Impériaux de toutes les classes, conséquents avec le zèle et la fidélité dont ils ont fait preuve dans les circonstances présentes, se conformeront avec empressement à cette décision.

"De l'avis de notre Saint-Synode et de notre permanent Conseil-National Mixte, nous avons cru devoir porter cette décision à la connaissance de tous les pieux Chrétiens Orthodoxes par la présente Encyclique à laquelle nous annexons aussi quelques exemplaires du règlement spécial de l'armée territoriale, dont il est question.

"Cette nouvelle mesure est vraiment un témoignage manifeste des bonnes intentions de Sa Majesté Impériale, notre très auguste et très bienfaisant Souverain, à l'égard de tous les peuples, sans exception, soumis sous son égide puissant et sous son paternel Gouvernement; car à côté des faveurs et des bienfaits prodigués journellement à tous, avec une sollicitude toute paternelle, il a plu à Sa Majesté d'accorder aujourd'hui aux non-Musulmans aussi l'insigne honneur pour qu'agissant de concert avec leurs compatriotes Musulmans, chacun sauvegarde sa propre patrie.

"Il n'y a aucun doute que tous les bénis Orthodoxes Chrétiens qui sont sujets fidèles de l'Empire, se prêteront avec toute l'empressement voulu à l'accomplissement de ce devoir sacré, d'autant plus que ce devoir n'est pas difficile, attendu qu'il se borne

simplement à la mission consistant en ce que les bataillons de l'armée territoriale gardent, en temps de guerre, leurs propres villes, sans qu'ils soient obligés de se rendre sur les champs de bataille, où il faut une armée bien exercée, à l'exception toutefois de ceux qui exprimeront le désir de se rendre sur le théâtre de la guerre, ainsi qu'il est expressément dit dans les articles respectifs du règlement.

"De notre part, nous venons vous engager paternellement, en accompagnant de nos bénédictions cordiales, tous les bénis Chrétiens Orthodoxes, afin qu'en leur qualité de sujets fidèles du Puissant Empire; de bons citoyens et d'enfants de la même patrie; considérant les nombreuses et grandes difficultés dont le très-respecté Gouvernement est entouré et lesquels exigent le secours et l'aide possibles de tous ses sujets en général, surtout dans cette circonstance où le Gouvernement se trouve dans le nécessité d'envoyer sur le théâtre de la guerre toute son armée régulière et exercée; considérant que le devoir de reconnaissance et de dévouement envers le Gouvernement qui nous accorde le grand honneur de défendre chacun son propre pays, ainsi que le devoir envers la patrie vous imposent l'obligation d'aider avec tout sacrifice et abnégation, le très respecté Gouvernement dans les efforts qu'il faits pour sortir des embarras et difficultés qui l'entourent; nous engageons, disons-nous, vous tous qui avez l'âge prescrit par le susdit règlement, à vous présenter avec empressement à l'inscription dans les bataillons de l'armée territoriale, sur l'invitation des autorités civiles compétentes. Nous vous engageons en outre à ne pas faire attention aux rumeurs qui pourraient être répandues et suivant lesquels ces bataillons seront envoyés à la guerre; car ainsi qu'il a été plus haut expliqué, les devoirs de l'armée territoriale consistent en l'obligation pour chacun des soldats de cette armée de maintenir la sécurité et la tranquillité dans son propre pays. Que chacun donc contribue avec zèle à l'exécution des mesures nécessaires à cet effet.

"Que la grâce de Dieu et sa miséricorde sans fin soient avec vous tous.

"Fait au mois de Décembre, Indiction VI."

No. 26.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 5, 1878.)

(No. 1510.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 24, 1877.

THE Porte has notified to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador that, in consequence of the declaration of war by Servia, it withdraws the permission that it had granted to Austro-Hungarian vessels under certain reserves to navigate the Danube to the mouth of the River Timok.

Count Zichy informs me that he is by no means surprised that the Turkish Government should have come to this decision, but that it does not practically affect Austro-Hungarian commerce or interests, as the Danube will not now be navigable on account of the ice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 27.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 5, 1878.)

(No. 1511.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 24, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called to-day upon the Grand Vizier to inform him that the Servian Agent at Vienna had stated to Count Andrassy that the Servian Government had determined not to send troops across the Drina, and not to attack Turkey on that side. He was, therefore, instructed to ask the Austro-Hungarian Government to request the Porte not to invade Servia by sending forces over that river.

Count Andrassy, Count Zichy said, had replied to the Servian Agent that, as Servia had chosen to make war upon Turkey without previously consulting the Austro-Hungarian Government, he considered, and was even prepared so to state in writing, that the Porte was entitled to perfect liberty of military action; and more, in the event of Servian troops crossing the Drina and invading Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Austro-Hungarian Government would itself take measures to oppose such a proceeding.

The Grand Vizier has expressed to me much satisfaction at this communication.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 28.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 5, 1878.)

(No. 1513.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1877.

ALTHOUGH there is no doubt that the Sultan and his Ministers are ready, and most desirous, for peace, in order to save the Empire from the immense sacrifice which the prosecution of the war must entail, every effort is being made to oppose the further advance of the Russians. For this purpose the Porte has now determined to form a large army in Roumelia and to bring from Bulgaria all the forces that can be moved from that province after leaving sufficient garrisons for the defence of the fortresses. Suleiman Pasha himself takes the command of the new army, and has already proceeded to Sofia.

The Minister of War informs me that there will be shortly about 140,000 men in Roumelia to hold the Balkan passes and to defend Sofia, Philippopolis, and Adrianople, against a Russian attack. About 40,000 men will, I understand, be brought from Bulgaria. A considerable part of this force has already passed through Constantinople, having been transported from Varna by sea; the remainder is now advancing over the Balkans to Adrianople. It includes some of the best Turkish troops. It is believed that the weather, which is now very severe, will arrest the movements of the Russians, and that time will thus be given to the Turkish military authorities to make all the necessary preparations for meeting the enemy.

Unless some unexpected events occur, the Russians will still meet with a very determined and formidable resistance, should they attempt to advance upon Adrianople, and that city is now stated to be in a condition to stand a prolonged siege.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 29.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 5, 1878.)

(No. 1514.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copies of despatches from Her Majesty's Vice-Consuls at Prevesa, Sulina, and Gallipoli respecting the state of affairs in their respective districts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 29.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Prevesa, December* 8, 1877.

WITH reference to the report that the brigand Stupas had made his appearance in the neighbourhood of Sulli, I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency that nothing further has reached me on the subject, and that the whole affair seems to be a mystery; it is even hinted that owing to a rumour which has been circulating here for some days, that the Redifs at Prevesa would have to leave for the front, the affair was got up merely to show that it is necessary for them to remain where they are.

The two companies that left this last week have, I hear, been sent to occupy various villages, but the Bimbashi took up his quarters at Cumarina, a village not more than four hours' ride from Prevesa.

The first batch of Bashi-Bazouks that arrived here has been sent to Zalongo, about a couple of hours further inland, but this makes no reduction in our irregular force, for small bodies of Bashi-Bazouks continue to arrive almost daily, and their number can, I think, with safety be put down at 350. Their presence, however, could very well be dispensed with, at least for the present, for it only inspires terror in the inhabitants, whose shops they plunder in the coolest manner possible, and to prevent this small bodies of Redifs have to patrol the streets, so that instead of helping the troops, which one would suppose was the object in sending them here, they, on the contrary, add to the work our much-reduced garrison of Redifs has to perform. Their walking off with other people's

goods is of daily, or better, of hourly occurrence, and should the loser of the goods attempt to stop the thief (I make use of this word because I cannot find one more fit for the occasion), the latter without loss of time either draws his yataghan or presents a pistol at his head.

I am told that as soon as a sufficient number of them (500 I believe) is collected here, they are to be dispatched to various villages, and if this is really to be put into execution, the rural population must indeed be pitied, for the conduct of these irregulars at Prevesa, where the chief authorities reside, and who, it must be confessed, have striven and are still striving to the utmost of their power to preserve order, but, I regret to say, with doubtful success, has been most disgraceful, so that who is to guarantee for their good behaviour in places where the immediate and constant vigilance of the authorities cannot be exercised?

I have good reason for supposing that the authorities, both civil and military, are most anxious to get rid of this disorderly set of troops, and I can think of nothing better just at present, so as to convey to your Excellency an idea of their utter uselessness and of the little reliance placed in them by the latter authorities, than to state that the Commandant refuses to supply them with guns, simply because he is afraid that they will run away with them. Only those who have been dispatched to Zalongo, as above referred to, are armed with Government rifles (muzzle-loaders), and which I hear were given to them at Margaritti or Parga.

From M. Kyprious I hear that about 400 men who form part of Liaz Agha's irregulars, arrived at Janina the other day, and that the 350 men under the command of Safula Bey, who reached there some time previously, had left for Arta on the 26th ultimo. He also states that, thanks to the energy of the Governor-General, Abdi Pasha, night robberies and disorderly acts have been put a stop to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 29.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Prevesa, December 15, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the return of the two companies of Redifs that left this about a fortnight ago, and as supposed at the time, for the neighbourhood of Sully, where the brigand Stupas was reported to have appeared. Nothing, however, was either seen or heard of that brigand, and the result of this military promenade, as it is now called, was the arrest of half-a-dozen young peasants, who, it seems, were of late in the habit of stealing cattle.

With respect to the conduct of the Bashi-Bazouks, I regret to have to state that it has not changed in the least, and I hear from a good source that a party of them that arrived here the other day, and who have already been shipped for Salahora, their destination being Arta, had robbed a church and had also committed other improper acts while on their way to Prevesa.

I deem it my duty also to acquaint your Excellency that the fall of Plevna has caused a very deep impression here, and the Turks appear now, for the first time since the breaking out of hostilities, to ponder seriously over the consequences of the war; nay, they even consider their cause now as almost hopeless, while the Christians secretly rejoice at the news, and, unless I am very much mistaken, they seem to think that the time has now arrived when Greece must take part in the struggle and strike a blow for their deliverance.

The Greek troops at Santa Maura, I am told by a well-informed person, are ordered to hold themselves in readiness to start at a moment's notice, but their destination is kept secret.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 29.

Vice-Consul Stokes to Mr. Layard.

Sir,

Sulina, December 19, 1877.

I HAVE now the honour of reporting to your Excellency that rumours are in circulation of another Russian attack upon the place, but what foundation there is for the rumour I cannot imagine and do not credit the report.

The Turkish iron-clads "Fethi Bulend" and "Moukademiek Khair" left this last week, the former for Sinope and the latter for Constantinople.

Last night a Hebrew named Grossman was strangled and robbed in his store. The store is situated in one of the principal streets, and is opposite the Austrian Consulate. No clue has up to the present been discovered respecting the perpetrators of the deed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) OCTAVUS STOKES.

Inclosure 4 in No. 29.

Vice-Consul Odoni to Mr. Layard.

(Extrait.)

Gallipoli, le 15 *Décembre*, 1877.

L'IRADE qui appelle les Rayas à faire partie de la Garde Civique a été lu au Palais du Gouvernement, et a été très mal accueilli par tous les non-Musulmans. Les Grecs en ont été jusqu'à faire des démonstrations contre leur Evêque pour avoir adhéré au contenu de cet Irade sans avoir, au préalable, reçu les instructions du Patriarche. Je suis persuadé que la majeure partie des jeunes gens émigrera si cette mesure sera mise en vigueur avant la fin de la guerre. Les Rayas sont actuellement très mal disposés envers le Gouvernement pour accepter d'être enrôlés dans n'importe quel corps. Plusieurs jeunes gens sont déjà partis clandestinement pour la Grèce, et beaucoup d'autres les suivront malgré que **l'autorité fait tout son possible pour empêcher leur départ.**

Si, même dans la seule moitié des Rayas de la Roumélie, l'esprit est conforme à celui des Rayas du Sandjak de Gallipoli, je suis d'opinion que le Gouvernement Turc commettrait une faute irréparable en mettant actuellement à exécution le contenu de l'Iradé.

Il faudrait, en ce cas, attendre des temps meilleurs, car, quand même le Gouvernement parviendrait à former une Garde Civique, il disposerait d'un corps sur lequel il ne pourrait nullement compter, et il fournirait le motif à une grande émigration de jeunes gens dont la majeure partie irait grossir les bataillons de l'armée de la Grèce.

Les Rayas en général, et surtout les Grecs, prêtant très peu de foi à la Constitution octroyée par Sa Majesté le Sultan, et s'il n'y a pas des émissaires, proprement dits, qui les engagent à se méfier du Gouvernement et à conserver l'animosité contre l'élément Turc, ce n'est pas moins vrai que parmi les sujets Hellènes il y en a qui font une espèce de propagande en méprisant l'administration locale, et en portant jusqu'aux nues la Constitution de la Grèce. Les Rayas Grecs écoutent avec plaisir les paroles et les discours de ces gens **qui savent astucieusement toucher la corde religieuse en faisant prévoir, dans le lointain,** le jour où les Orthodoxes (*sic*) pourront officier avec pompe dans l'Eglise de Sainte Sophie.

Le Grec se sépare des autres Rayas, et il serait bien aise s'il pourrait un jour opprimer à volonté les Arméniens et les Juifs, qui, de leur côté, préféreraient toujours n'importe quel Gouvernement à un Gouvernement Grec. Il serait beaucoup plus facile de mettre, partialement, toutes ces races en parfait accord avec les Musulmans plutôt qu'entre elles. L'animosité, je dirai plutôt l'aversion, qui règne parmi ces diverses races, est si évidente que l'œil le plus inexpert ne pourrait s'y tromper.

En tout ce qui précède, Excellence, je ne fais allusion qu'aux populations hétérogènes du Sandjak de Gallipoli et spécialement des Cazas de Gallipoli, Ceasan, et Charkeui, et ce n'est qu'après avoir attentivement étudié les diverses opinions et idées des unes et des autres, et avoir acquis la certitude de ce que j'avance, que je me permets d'en faire part à **votre Excellence.**

No. 30.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 1515.)

Constantinople, December 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the Proclamation which has been issued by the Porte to the Servians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 30.

Proclamation.

Sublime Porte, le 20 Décembre, 1877.

Serbes!

VOUS viviez paisibles et heureux sous l'égide protectrice de Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans et le Suzerain de la Serbie, et vous jouissiez des bienfaits d'une autonomie complète, lorsqu'il y a un an et demi, les hommes qui vous gouvernaient vous ont entraînés dans une rébellion ouverte contre l'autorité suzeraine, rébellion qui a attiré sur vous des calamités de toute sorte qui sont encore trop récentes pour que vous en ayez perdu le souvenir.

Lorsque cette rébellion a été réprimée Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, touché de vos souffrances et voulant affermir votre fidélité dans l'avenir par le sentiment d'un nouveau bienfait, a consenti à rétablir les relations de la Principauté avec la Sublime Porte telles qu'elles existaient avant la guerre. C'est ainsi que votre autonomie a été maintenue, que les armées Impériales ont évacué les points stratégiques importants qu'elles avaient conquis, au prix de leur sang, et qu'enfin aucune indemnité ne vous a été imposée, aucune garantie n'a été exigée pour l'avenir.

La Sublime Porte n'a même pas imposé l'éloignement des hommes qui avaient causé tous ces malheurs. Ce sont pourtant ces mêmes hommes qui, insensibles au sentiment de tant de bienfaits et inaccessibles à toute idée de justice et de devoir, profitant de la guerre actuelle, n'ont eu d'autre soin et d'autre souci que de préparer un nouveau soulèvement contre l'autorité légitime de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Croyant aujourd'hui l'occasion favorable pour réaliser leurs odieux dessins, ils ont déclaré la guerre à la Sublime Porte sous des prétextes empreints à la fois de fausseté et d'hypocrisie.

Dieu ne laissera pas impunie cette injuste aggression, mais au moment où le Gouvernement Impérial s'apprête à combattre cette nouvelle rébellion, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a cru juste et nécessaire de vous montrer qu'il sait sur qui doit retomber principalement la responsabilité des malheurs dont vous êtes menacés.

Le Prince Milan Obrenovitch, que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan avait investi sur votre demande de la haute dignité de Prince de Serbie, qu'il avait comblé de ses faveurs Impériales, et à qui il avait accordé le pardon pour sa première rébellion, a forfait pour la seconde fois à ses devoirs de fidélité et d'honneur, et s'est montré indigne de vous gouverner. Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a en conséquence déclaré et constaté que le Prince Milan Obrenovitch s'est lui-même placé en état de déchéance de la dignité de Prince de Serbie, et vous le fait savoir.

Serbes!

Rappelez-vous la tranquillité et la prospérité dont vous avez joui sous la suzeraineté de l'Empire Ottoman; attachez-vous à ces institutions, qui seules ont assuré dans le passé et peuvent garantir dans l'avenir la sécurité et le bonheur de la Serbie; ne vous rangez pas du côté des ennemis de votre Suzerain; secondez, au contraire, de tout votre pouvoir, les efforts que va tenter le Gouvernement Impérial pour rétablir chez vous le règne de la légalité. Là est votre salut, car tous ceux qui seront les complices des hommes pervers qui se font un jeu des obligations les plus sacrées se repentiront bientôt de leur égarement. Soyez vous-même les juges de la conduite de votre Prince et de ses Conseillers; demandez-vous s'ils sont encore dignes de votre confiance alors qu'ils ont perdu celle de votre Souverain; et n'hésitez pas à vous séparer d'une cause déjà condamnée par la conscience publique avant même d'avoir été combattue par les armes.

No. 31.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 1517.)

Constantinople, December 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose two despatches from Captain Fife upon the effect of the war on the inhabitants of Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 31.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

Sofia, December 20, 1877.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to forward to your Excellency to-day the telegram of which a copy is inclosed.

A feeling of great insecurity prevails here owing to the Servian declaration of war. This town is only a week's march from the frontier in favourable weather, and it is doubtful whether Suleiman Pasha will arrive in time with a sufficient force to oppose the Servian advance. The movements of both sides will be greatly impeded by the snow, and the invasion perhaps stopped by it.

Again, if the Orkhanie Pass were taken by the Russians, or turned across the low mountains on the west, their light troops might reach Sofia the same evening.

Large numbers of Mahomedans and Jews have already quitted the town, and are now doing so with the consent of, and assisted by, the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain,*
Military Attaché.

Copy of Telegram No. 9.

TURKISH detachment intrenched in Berkofitcha Pass; town said to be occupied by Russians. Servians commenced operations by small skirmishes. Suleiman Pasha with considerable force coming to oppose them. Two feet of snow in the plains with appearance of continuing, perhaps, for two months. Wheeled traffic on roads difficult. Country off the roads impassable for all arms. Russians said to have only wheeled transport.

Sofia, December 20.

Inclosure 2 in No. 31.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

Sofia, December 20, 1877.

Sir,

IN my preceding despatch of this date, I had the honour to inform your Excellency of the critical situation at Sofia, the feeling of alarm amongst the inhabitants, and the daily departure of large numbers of them from the town. These unfortunate people find themselves forced to undertake a long journey in bullock arabas, and sometimes partly on foot, across the mountain passes in the present severe weather, travelling by night as well as by day.

The Jews leave because they fear that if the Turks abandon the town that the Circassians may plunder it before the arrival of the Russians and Servians; this they usually do. Most of the Jews with means have already left Sofia, and the poorer class is now following principally towards Salonica.

The Mahomedans are going in great numbers, and it is said that eventually they will all do so. Most take the direction of Tatar Bazardjik. They fear being robbed by the Circassians, in spite of their being Turks. They also dread the Russians and armed Bulgarians, after the massacres of last summer in Roumelia.

Many of the richer Bulgarians have left the town, but comparatively few of this race, compared with the Mahomedans and Jews, are doing so. From villages, however, within the zone of operations, the refugee Bulgarians are very numerous; they leave fearing that the Circassians may plunder and commit excesses, or after this has been done.

The inhabitants are glad to escape from a town which may possibly be the scene of a battle ending in its destruction. Now while they have leisure they may carry away the more valuable part of their property, instead of being perhaps glad to escape with their lives at some future period. Finally, the different races distrust each other since the recent massacres of Mahomedans and Bulgarians in Roumelia.

Regarding these massacres, I may remark that they appeared to be carried on in a spirit of retaliation. A corps had been formed in Roumania, professedly for the purpose of avenging the massacres of Bulgarians of the previous year, and was called the "Vengeurs." As the Turks retired they left the populations unharmed; the Russians advanced south of the Balkans disarming the Mahomedans and arming the Bulgarians; and it appeared from the evidence I received in nearly every case of massacre by the Bulgarians, that either Cossacks were present as spectators, or incited them to the slaughter.

When I entered Eski-Zagra, on its recapture by the Turks, I asked an American missionary there whether the Russians had, during their occupation, behaved well or otherwise to the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood. He replied that he thought the Russians had not committed any excesses, but that the Bulgarians had been let loose and had done so, and he thought perhaps that was justifiable. I mention this to show the animus and way of thinking of an exponent of their view, himself nominally an apostle of peace and good-will. But according to this reasoning the Turks were justified in the massacres of the previous year, which were in retaliation for those committed by the Bulgarians at the attempted rising.

I have said enough to recall to the mind the events that have led to the present feeling of mistrust which I have mentioned. I would add, however, that from what I could I could learn in the Tundja Valley, and in the neighbourhood of the Zaras, that before the disturbing influence of the war, a very good feeling existed in those districts between the Bulgarians and Turks; that the former were the richer and more numerous, and their villages and houses larger and better built, and they virtually controlled local affairs by their superior influence. The district is one of very great fertility and beauty, and I should say that before the war destitution was scarcely known there. The result of the war has been the destruction of two-thirds of the houses in villages and towns, the massacre or flight of the inhabitants, the violation of most of the women, a bitter, undying hatred sown between the survivors. The cattle and stores of provisions and fodder have been consumed by the contending armies, or the crops were left to rot on the ground. No preparation of the soil has been made for future harvests.

There are at present in Sofia about 3,000 refugees, I believe principally from the Plevna and Loftcha districts. This number varies continually as they move on towards Tatar Bazardjik, and fresh batches arrive; the last were from the neighbourhood of Berkoftcha. Many of the Turkish women arrive here in a perfectly destitute state, the husband, brothers, or sons being in the army; other refugees have brought away with them small supplies of food, and sometimes a few cattle. They travel in their own arabas, or hire them from Bulgarians at a small cost, or use those lent by the Turkish authorities. Thus I hear that 500 arabas have just been placed by the Governor at the disposal of the inhabitants of Sofia.

The refugees frequently express their gratitude for the charitable aid given them by the English. In Sofia the Turkish Government gives rations to some.

The army in the Orchanie Pass appears to supply itself with fodder by absolute seizure; no receipts being given; the supplies of Mohammedans and Christians are taken alike. Bullock arabas and their drivers are impressed for the transport service of the army. As soon as the fodder is finished in a village the inhabitants, if their cattle have not been taken by Circassians, become refugees in order to obtain food for them.

The Circassians have the greatest dread of the Russians, and are the first to become refugees. They retire with more property than the other races, however, for they are in the habit of adding to their stock any cattle, horses, or plunder which they are able to get along the road they follow. I have several times inquired from Bulgarians and Armenians their opinion of the Turkish rule, and have received the reply that they have nothing to complain against the Turks, but only against the Circassians and Kurds. From what I have seen of the former (Circassians), I can fully understand their being a scourge to the populations. If they were under a severe discipline, and were mounted on larger horses, it is probable that they would make good cavalry, which is anything but the case at present. Thus, on the first day of the Turkish attack at Shipka, most of them were absent, being busy carrying away plunder from the burning village. The smallness of their horses, and their want of discipline, renders them unable, as a rule, to cope with the enemy's mounted troops, with whom they rarely wait to close. They were of use, to a certain extent, for reconnaissance work with the army of Suleiman Pasha in Roumelia this summer, in the

absence of better cavalry; but no reliance can be placed on them, as they rarely obey orders. They presence had also, probably, a good moral effect in restraining the movements of the Cossacks. As they accompany the march of an army in small scattered bands, it is impossible for the Commander to prevent them from committing excesses occasionally on the inhabitants or their property, and they sometimes wantonly set fire to stores, fodder, &c., in which the army may stand in great need.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain*,
Military Attaché.

No. 32.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 1518.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Raouf Pasha, Acting Minister of War, and Said Pasha, Acting Minister of Marine, have been definitively appointed to the above posts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 33.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 369.)
My Lord, *Athens, December 28, 1877.*

VARIOUS reports having been published in the Athens newspapers as to a demonstration in favour of war which appears to have taken place at Lamia and in which some of the troops quartered there are said to have joined, I asked M. Tricoupi to-day what truth there was in these reports, and his Excellency informed me that it was true that one battalion of the troops at Lamia had taken part in the popular demonstration which had occurred there, but that the Government had sent orders at once to have the offending troops punished. M. Tricoupi further said that the Turkish Minister having made no remarks to him on the subject, the Government had been enabled to act with all the more severity, there being no grounds for supposing that the Greek Government was acting under pressure on the part of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 34.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 371. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, December 29, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 328 and 329 of the 2nd instant, No. 348 of the 13th instant, and No. 364 of the 20th instant, and 368 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that Count Maffei, the Italian Minister, told me to-day that M. Tricoupi had spoken to him about three weeks ago as to an intended occupation of Bosnia by Austria and of Albania by Italy, and that M. Tricoupi, notwithstanding his (Count Maffei's) assurances that Italy had no such project in view, persisted in assuming that that was the policy of Italy.

Count Maffei told me also confidentially that seeing that forced constructions were being placed in Athens upon certain proceedings of his Government, the object of which was purely humanitarian, he had pointed out clearly to the Greek Government that those proceedings had not the significance which was attached to them in Greece, and he mentioned to me that Italian ships of war had ceased to come to Greek waters as

frequently as they had been in the habit of doing, as their visits appeared to be inspiring the Greeks with hopes for which there was no foundation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 35.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1878.)

(No. 372.)
My Lord, *Athens, December 29, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that His Majesty the King left Athens to-day for Thebes and Chalcis to inspect the troops quartered in those towns.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 36.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 5. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 4, 1878.*

PORTE is very desirous of obtaining an armistice, and it appears to me that it is of the utmost importance that one should be concluded without delay. Sofia has been evacuated by Turkish troops; the state of affairs at Adrianople, according to the reports I receive, is far from satisfactory; here it is critical. There is great discontent, and the Chamber has assumed very hostile attitude to the Government. Grand Vizier has resigned, and the whole of the Ministry will follow him, unless he withdraws his resignation, which he may do. Mahmoud Damat Pasha has also resigned. Count Zichy is equally persuaded that an armistice is most urgently required to prevent serious disaster, and will telegraph in this sense to Count Andrassy.

There is much dissatisfaction with Suleiman Pasha, and he may probably be recalled. Some members of the Government wish him to be replaced by Moukhtar Pasha, to whom, however, Grand Vizier is opposed.

No. 37.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 6. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 5, 1878, 9 A.M.*

I RECEIVED late last night a message from the Sultan informing me that, according to telegrams from Suleiman Pasha, the situation on this side of the Balkans is becoming more and more serious, and that peace was now an absolute necessity. His Majesty desired to know, privately, whether any favourable result had been obtained through the mediation of Her Majesty's Government. I communicated to His Majesty in reply, confidentially and unofficially, the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday morning. The accounts received from Consul Blunt as to the preparations for the defence at Adrianople are most unsatisfactory. He seems to doubt whether the place can be held, should the Russians advance in force.

No. 38.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 7.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 5, 1878, 11·15 A.M.*

I AM informed that the Sultan has decreed that Batoum, Souda Bay in Crete, and a port on the Albanian coast, are to be free ports, and that an Iradé to this effect will be shortly published.

No. 39.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 9.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 5, 1878.*

RUSSIANS have occupied Ilijé, and completed the investment of Erzeroum; communication by telegraph has been stopped since yesterday morning; garrison attempted sortie day before yesterday, and the result not yet known.

No. 40.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 10.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 5, 1878, 6·15 P.M.*

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs to-day from Adrianople, as follows:—

"Turkish troops at Isladi have retired upon Prassadin Derbend. Suleiman Pasha leaves this evening for Tatar-Bazardjik, to take command of Shakir Pasha's division. He and other divisional commanders are placed under the direct orders of Seraskier. The President of local Court Martial has also been recalled."

With reference to above, I am informed that forces from Sofia have withdrawn in two bodies to Ichtiman and Samakov.

No. 41.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, January 5, 1878, 4·30 P.M.*

THE Danube is frozen. Foot passengers can cross.

No. 42.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1878.)

(No. 349. Political.)
My Lord, *Cairo, December 28, 1877.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Port Said reports to me, under date of the 24th instant, that Her Majesty's ship "Pallas" has relieved Her Majesty's ship "Rupert" as the guard ship at Port Said.

Her Majesty's Consul at Alexandria reports, in a letter dated the 23rd instant, the embarkation on board three Government transports at Alexandria of Egyptian troops for Turkey, said to number about 12,000 men.

I hear that these troops are for the most part negroes from Upper Egypt, to whom the cold and privations of a winter campaign in Turkey will, in all probability, prove fatal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 43.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1878.)

(No. 352. Political.)
My Lord, *Cairo, December 29, 1877.*

REPORTS having reached me through the medium of the Acting British Vice-Consul here of some signs of an agitation in favour of a Mussulman crusade, I took occasion to-day to speak to the Khedive upon the subject.

It had been reported to me that a meeting of the Sheikh-el-Islam, the Ulemas, the

Sheikhs of the several sects, and the Softas of the University, had been held on the 24th instant at the Khedive's Palace, when His Highness had induced them to sign a declaration in writing that they would head a movement to follow the Standard of the Prophet whenever it should be unfurled.

Both the Khedive and Cherif Pasha positively assure me that this report is utterly untrue, and that the only grounds for it are that the religious authorities desired to make a census of all the Dervishes in Egypt, and that the Sheikh-el-Islam convoked a meeting of the heads of the various sects with a view to obtaining from them the necessary statistics.

The Khedive said he blamed even this step, but he was not aware of it until it was too late to stop it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 44.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1878.)

(No. 444.)
My Lord, *Rome, December 31, 1877.*

HIS Majesty the King gave the customary audience for the new year this morning to heads of the Diplomatic Body, each member being received, as usual, separately.

After some general conversation, His Majesty made some observations on the state of European affairs. His Majesty expressed the most anxious desire for the re-establishment of peace, and inquired if I could give him any news on this subject.

I informed the King of the step taken at St. Petersburgh by Her Majesty's Government, and that, in communicating it to His Majesty's Government, I had been directed to express a hope for their support.

His Majesty said that the policy of Italy was essentially a pacific one, that neither he nor his Government had any ambitious views, and that all the reports which had been circulated on this subject were entirely groundless.

His Majesty inquired the reasons for the meeting of Parliament earlier than usual, and I replied in the same sense as I did yesterday to M. Depretis, as reported in my despatch No. 442 of yesterday's date.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 45.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 11.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 6, 1878.*

CAPTAIN FIFE writes from Tatar-Bazardjik, under date of January 2, that on December 28 Russians crossed the Balkans in force two miles west of Tashkessen. Part remained there, part went towards Sofia, and cavalry to Sofia-Ichtiman road. Turks made good their retreat on 31st December from Orchanie Pass to south-east. Baker Pasha, with rear-guard of 8 battalions, at Tashkessen defeated desperate attempt of 30 Russian battalions to force his position. He withdrew after dark, and followed the army.

No. 46.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 12.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 6, 1878.*

GRAND VIZIER has withdrawn his resignation, the difference with the Chamber having been arranged. Mahmoud Damat's resignation is accepted, and he will, I think, be replaced by Mehemet Ali Pasha. Chief command has been definitively withdrawn from Suleiman Pasha, who will now only have a division.

No. 47.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 13.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 6, 1878.*

FOLLOWING has been received from General Kemball dated to-day:—

"Sortie without effect. Russians firmly posted at Ilijé. Turkish cavalry has retired to Ashkalé."

No. 48.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *St. Petersburgh, January 6, 1878, 5·45 P.M.*

I AM informed that the Russian Government have ordered lately 100 torpedo launches, at a price of 40,000 roubles each, or about 4,000*l.* Large orders for steel guns have been given to Krupp.

No. 49.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 107. Political.)
My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, December 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the necessary instructions have been received here from the Porte for the organization of the new territorial force called "Asaker-Milkieh," but it is calculated that some months will elapse before the preliminary arrangements can be completed and the enrolments effected.

All Ottoman subjects, of whatever religion, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five, will have to serve in this force, excepting, of course, those Mussulmans between the ages of twenty and twenty-five who are drawn for the Nizam or regular troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 50.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 1522.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 28, 1877.*

I HAD requested that inquiries should be made of Captain Campbell, an English officer, who has been present at several engagements between the Turks and Russians during the present war, as to the treatment of the wounded upon the field of battle by both sides.

I have the honour to inclose a letter which he has addressed on the subject to Colonel Norton.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Captain Campbell to Colonel Norton.

Dear Norton, *Pera, December 17, 1877.*

IN reply to your question of yesterday, relative to the treatment of wounded men during the portion of this war which I have personally witnessed, let me tell you what happened on the morning of the 17th September.

You know the ground. As the Russians charged along the rock, they simply murdered every man who lay along the crest.

I saw Russian soldiers using their bayonets, the butt-ends of their rifles, and pieces of rock, to kill helpless, wounded men. That the Turkish regular, whose wonderful docility and endurance under the most trying circumstances are beyond doubt, does retaliate, forms, I regret to say, one of the most horrible features of this war of murders.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. CAMPBELL.

No. 51.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 7, 1878.*)

(No. 1528.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 28, 1877.*

THE Sultan has appointed three Christians, who are enrolled in the Civic Guard, to be his Aides-de-camp. They are Elias Effendi, a Gregorian Armenian, Director of the Archives in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; a son of Mihran Bey Duz, a Catholic Armenian; and a brother of the Grand Logothete, Aristarchi Bey, a Greek.

These appointments appear to have made a good impression upon the Christians, and afford a further proof of the Sultan's desire to pursue a just and conciliatory policy towards them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 52.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 7, 1878.*)

(No. 735.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 31, 1877.*

ON the Emperor's return here it was generally reported, even in official circles, that it was His Majesty's intention, after a stay of a few days, to visit the army of the Caucasus previous to his rejoining the army of the Danube. This intention is now apparently abandoned, and His Majesty will remain here for the present.

It is rumoured that the Cesarewitch and the Grand Dukes Vladimir and Alexis will shortly return here.

General Todleben has been appointed to the command of the army which is to operate against Rustchuk, with Prince Immeratinski as the Chief of his Staff.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 53.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 7, 1878.*)

(No. 744.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 30, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship a leading article published by the "Agence Russe," referring to the effect which the convocation of the British Parliament is likely to produce in Turkey, and observing that the eventuality most feared by Her Majesty's Government, namely, the march of a Russian army to Constantinople, is precisely that to which their policy may lead.

This article is undoubtedly written by Baron Jomini, the intimate adviser and factotum of Prince Gortchakow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Extract from the "Agence Russe."

St. Pétersbourg, Jeudi soir, le 1/13 Décembre, 1877.

UNE observation qu'il est impossible de ne pas faire, et que feront certainement tous les esprits non prévenus, en présence des encouragements plus ou moins directs que le Cabinet de Londres ne cesse de donner à la Porte, en ce moment encore par la convocation motivée et anticipée du Parlement, c'est que par ces encouragements ce Cabinet arrive à **provoquer forcément, logiquement les résultats mêmes qu'il lui importait le plus, d'après ses déclarations, de voir conjurés.**

Il est de fait que la Turquie ne peut faire autrement que d'interpréter cette attitude du Gouvernement Britannique dans le sens de ses espérances, qui ont toujours consisté dans une participation de l'Angleterre à la guerre et d'y trouver par conséquent une excitation à résister jusqu'à toute dernière extrémité aux légitimes demandes de la Russie. Il en résulte que l'éventualité la plus redoutée par ce Gouvernement, c'est-à-dire la marche des armées Russes sur Constantinople, est précisément celle à laquelle sa politique aboutit.

Comment empêcher après cela que des esprits logiques, jugeant des intentions par les résultats, ne se rappellent les obstacles que le Cabinet Beaconsfield a successivement opposés à l'aplanissement du différend Oriental, alors que la guerre pouvait être encore évitée, ainsi que son fameux mot: "Il faut une saignée," et ne lui attribuent conséquemment l'intention secrète d'imprimer à cette guerre des proportions telles qu'elles permettent à l'Angleterre de s'enrichir des dépouilles de l'Empire Ottoman?

La demande de médiation adressée par la Porte aux Puissances ne pouvait pas être acceptée par cette raison, entre autres, qu'au point de vue du droit public Européen, une médiation n'est possible que lorsqu'elle est demandée par les deux belligérants. En cas contraire, ce n'est plus une médiation, mais une intervention.

No. 54.

Consul Smallwood to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 7.*)

(No. 5. Consular.)
My Lord, *Venice, January 3, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that a Commission of Greek Military Delegates have come to Venice with the object, it is said, of negotiating the purchase of some ships of war from the Italian Government, and that after having inspected the frigate "Vettor Pisani," and the Royal Arsenal they left for Spezia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDW. SMALLWOOD.

No. 55.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 7, 1878.*)

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Constantinople, le 27 Décembre, 1877.*

UN télégramme de Suleyman Pacha, en date du 17 Décembre, a porté à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial les faits suivants:—

D'après le rapport d'un sous-officier qui, ayant été fait prisonnier au combat de Matchin, a réussi à s'évader, 200 femmes Musulmanes, contraintes de servir les Russes, ont subi les traitements les plus ignominieux. Leurs jupes ont été déchirées par les soldats, qui les ont ensuite obligées à se promener dans cet état de nudité.

Dans le but de surprendre nos vedettes, les Russes font porter le fez à quelques-uns de leurs soldats. Ils ont fusillé publiquement des Circassiens prisonniers et blessés.

En outre, Suleyman Pacha annonce à la Sublime Porte que les Russes ayant continué à diriger le feu de leur artillerie sur les hôpitaux de Roustchouk, il a dû envoyer un employé du Czarevitz au parlementaire tant pour requérir l'observation des stipulations de la Convention de Genève à cet égard que pour demander des explications sur les actes mentionnés plus haut.

Je prie votre Excellence de signaler ces faits au Gouvernement près duquel elle est accréditée, et de leur donner la plus large publicité.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SERVER.

No. 56.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 7, 1878.)

Constantinople, le 27 Décembre, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur.

POUR faire suite à mon télégramme du 19 de ce mois, j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-joint, copie de la Proclamation adressée par le Gouvernement Impérial au peuple Serbe.

Je prie votre Excellence de communiquer ce document au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SERVER.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Proclamation addressed to the Servians by the Sublime Porte.

Serbes!

VOUS viviez paisibles et heureux sous l'égide protectrice de Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Ottomans et le Suzerain de la Serbie et vous jouissiez des bienfaits d'une autonomie complète, lorsqu'il y a un an et demi les hommes qui vous gouvernaient vous ont entraînés dans une rébellion ouverte contre l'autorité suzeraine, rébellion qui a attiré sur vous des calamités de toute sorte qui sont encore trop récentes pour que vous en ayez perdu le souvenir.

Lorsque cette rébellion a été réprimée, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, touché de vos souffrances, et voulant affermir votre fidélité dans l'avenir par le sentiment d'un nouveau bienfait, a consenti à rétablir les relations de la Principauté avec la Sublime Porte telles qu'elles existaient avant la guerre. C'est ainsi que votre autonomie a été maintenue, que les armées Impériales ont évacué les points stratégiques importants qu'elles avaient conquis au prix de leur sang, et qu'enfin aucune indemnité ne vous a été imposée, aucune garantie n'a été exigée pour l'avenir. La Sublime Porte n'a même pas imposé l'éloignement des hommes qui avaient causé tous ces malheurs.

Ce sont pourtant ces mêmes hommes qui, insensibles au sentiment de tant de bienfaits et inaccessibles à toute idée de justice et de devoir, profitant de la guerre actuelle, n'ont eu d'autre soin et d'autre souci que de préparer un nouveau soulèvement contre l'autorité légitime de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Croyant aujourd'hui l'occasion favorable pour réaliser leurs odieux desseins, ils ont **déclaré la guerre à la Sublime Porte sous des prétextes empreints à la fois de fausseté et** d'hypocrisie.

Dieu ne laissera pas impunie cette injuste agression; mais au moment où le Gouvernement Impérial s'apprête à combattre cette nouvelle rébellion, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a cru juste et nécessaire de vous montrer qu'il sait sur qui doit retomber principalement la responsabilité des malheurs dont vous êtes menacés.

Le Prince Milan Obrénovich, que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan avait investi sur votre demande de la haute dignité de Prince de Serbie, qu'il avait comblé de ses faveurs **Impériales, et à qui il avait accordé le pardon pour sa première rébellion, a forfait pour la** seconde fois à ses devoirs de fidélité et d'honneur, et s'est montré indigne de vous gouverner. Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a, en conséquence, déclaré et constaté que le Prince Milan Obrénovich s'est lui-même placé en état de déchéance de la dignité de Prince de Serbie et vous le fait savoir.

Serbes!

Rappelez-vous la tranquillité et la prospérité dont vous avez joui sous la suzeraineté de l'Empire Ottoman: attachez-vous à ces institutions, qui seules ont assuré dans le passé et peuvent garantir dans l'avenir la sécurité et le bonheur de la Serbie; ne vous rangez pas **du côté des ennemis de votre Suzerain; secondez, au contraire, de tout votre pouvoir, les** efforts que va tenter le Gouvernement Impérial pour rétablir chez vous le règne de la

légalité. Là est votre salut, car tous ceux qui seront les complices des hommes pervers qui se font un jeu des obligations les plus sacrées se repentiront bientôt de leur égarement. Soyez vous-mêmes les juges de la conduite de votre Prince et de ses Conseillers; demandez-vous s'ils sont encore dignes de votre confiance, alors qu'ils ont perdu celle de votre Souverain, et n'hésitez pas à vous séparer d'une cause déjà condamnée par la conscience publique, avant même d'avoir été combattue par les armes.

Sublime Porte, le 20 Décembre, 1877.

No. 57.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha January 7, 1878.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 6 Janvier*, 1878.

LE Gouvernement Impérial désire offrir au commerce de toutes les nations des facilités et des avantages spéciaux dans ses transactions avec les provinces et les États voisins en érigeant Batoum en Asie, Suda en Crète, et Aya-Samuda en Albanie, en ports francs dès le rétablissement de la paix. A cet effet, il a été décidé de soumettre dès à présent au Parlement le projet de loi y relatif. Je vous prie de donner confidentiellement connaissance de cette résolution à Lord Derby qui, je n'en doute pas, en appréciera l'importance et les heureux effets, particulièrement au point de vue du commerce Britannique.

No. 58.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 13.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, January 7, 1878.*

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copies of a note and of its inclosure from the Turkish Ambassador at this Court, calling attention to the manner in which the Turkish sick and wounded have been treated by the Russian authorities at Kars; and I have to instruct your Excellency to bring this complaint to the notice of the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 59.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 14.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 7, 1878, 1 p.m.*

CONSUL BLUNT writes that Servian patrols have reached Radomir, between Kustendil and Sofia; and that as they and the Russians advance they arm the Bulgarian population; and that the dread of repetition of the cruelties perpetrated last summer have caused a general panic, and populations are flying to Philippopolis and will flock to Adrianople, which will greatly embarrass authorities in providing for the defence of that place.

Russian advance-guard have occupied Sofia.

Several English doctors and Colonel Baker, V.C., who was with Baker Pasha, and was seriously ill, have fallen into the hands of the Russians.

No. 60.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 16.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 7, 1878.*

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs following to-day:—

"It is officially reported from Philippopolis that Russians entered Toundja valley yesterday through passes between villages of Issova and Hamili, in Plain of Kyzanlik, cutting off communications between Shipka and Kyzanlik town. Authorities and inhabitants of town have fled, and as telegraphic communication between it and Adria-

hople is interrupted, it is evident that Kvzanlik has again been occupied by Russians. The same day another column appeared on heights this side of Trojan Pass, menacing Carlova. If it succeeds in occupying Carlova it will completely isolate Turkish position at Shipka."

No. 61.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9, 1878.)

(No. 82. Political.)

Canea, Crete, December 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to his Excellency Mr. Layard, reporting the arrival here of a Commission from the Porte charged with the duty of attempting to satisfy the demands of the Cretan Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Consul Sandwith to Mr. Layard.

Canea, Crete, December 29, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the arrival here on Christmas-day of the Imperial Commissioners Costaki Adossides Pasha and Selim Effendi. The former at once sent me your Excellency's letter, in which I am instructed to give him all the assistance in my power in the fulfilment of his important mission. On the following day I called upon his Excellency and had a long conversation with him and his colleague on the measures they proposed to take in order to satisfy the Christians. I ventured to give it as my opinion that they would be acting wisely in dealing with them liberally by making large concessions at once, instead of haggling over them one by one, as it was plainly for the interest of the Porte to close the discussion as soon as possible, while the Cretans would desire rather to prolong it in order to gain time. As for the opposition the Commission was likely to meet with from the Mussulman minority by adopting such a course, I thought they might afford to disregard it, as there could be little doubt that the Moslems could be brought to accept any arrangement, even though it involved the sacrifice of the dominant influence they have hitherto managed to retain. I was particularly careful to put Costaki Pasha on his guard against three individuals whom I named, two Mussulmans and a Christian, whose noxious power has constantly been employed to evil ends. Their names are Hassan Effendi Kavourkai, Ismail Effendi Konyaumjakai, and Patrides Effendi, of whose intrigues Costaki Pasha was not ignorant when formerly in Crete.

I was glad to learn from his Excellency that he intended to go into the country at once, and he and his colleague set out yesterday for Vamos, in Apokorona, where resides the Christian Governor of Sphakia, Nikolaki Sartinski Pasha. It is their purpose, after conferring with him, to visit the Committee, which has now shifted its quarters from Fré to the village of Campos, only three hours from this town. The Committee's original number, consisting of twenty-four, has been largely increased by the election of ten members to represent each of the six westernmost Kazas of Crete, besides seven from the town of Rethymo. Canea has elected eight Delegates with the approval of the Government, but they have not yet joined their colleagues, and it is doubtful if they ever will. The permanent Committee thus numbers nearly 100 members. The Commissioners, if they really adopt the plan attributed to them of visiting the Committee in person, may be said to be recognizing its legal existence; but there are palpable advantages to be gained in thus dealing directly with the people's Delegates, as no arrangement would be possible which had not obtained their previous sanction.

I do not pretend to say what chances of success the Commission is likely to have. It has before it a task beset with very grave difficulties owing to the continuance of hostilities with Russia, for it requires but a slight acquaintance with the Cretans to feel assured that they will not be anxious for a final settlement as long as the progress of the war holds out to them the hope of exacting further concessions from the Porte, or even of

shaking off its authority altogether. It is quite clear, however, that there is a general desire on the part of the people of this town, and to a less extent of Selino and Kissamos, to accept any reasonable compromise rather than bring on their country the calamity of war. I have encouraged the leading inhabitants to hope for a satisfactory solution of the present difficulties from the labours of the Commission, and Mr. Vice-Consul Moazzo, who more than any other Cretan townsman enjoys the confidence of the Christian Chiefs, has written letters at my request to several of them, urging them to close with the offers which Costaki Pasha is authorized to propose.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—January 1, 1878.—Costaki Pasha and his colleague returned to Canea rather unexpectedly yesterday. I learn that they had not visited the Committee or even any of its members, and those Chiefs whom they invited to approach them, notably old Kostoros Veludaki and Gogoni, declined to come, alleging that they had no authority to speak in the name of the people, who had delegated their power to the Committee. It is evident that the key of the situation lies with them. Costaki Pasha has expressed his intention to visit me this afternoon after the departure of the post, when doubtless I shall learn more from his lips. I am aware, however, that his Excellency intends returning again to the country.

T. B. S.

No. 62.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9, 1878.)

(No. 83. Political.)

Canea, Crete, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,

NEXT to the arrival of the Commission from Constantinople, the doings of Hajé Michali, the Chief who landed in Crete a fortnight ago, occupy the principal attention. He goes about the country with a band of about fifty armed men without any apprehension for his personal safety. He has been doing friendly offices for the Mussulman peasantry, offering escorts to Canea to such as have a mind to leave their homes, and restoring to others their stolen cattle. Towards the Government, on the other hand, he has shown a hostile attitude, which he exhibited the other day by burning down a large block-house which dominated his native village of Lakkos. This has usually been occupied by a company of regular troops, but was latterly evacuated by them, as have several others in this part of the island, the Government not having sufficient troops to garrison their numerous fortresses. It is becoming known that Hajé Michali is provided with money as well as with arms, his followers receiving pay. Whether this money has been provided by the Committee in Athens or come from Russia is uncertain. As the Haji has been living in Russia since the last insurrection, and was in the receipt of a pension there, it is not unlikely that he may still be drawing money from the same source. The Cretans are mostly in such indigent circumstances that any adventurer with a command of money could draw thousands after him.

There has been considerable turmoil in Rethymo of late owing to the presence in that town of many Moslem refugees, who being all armed and naturally in no pleasant mood at quitting their homes, are exciting fears among the Christians. There exists in that town a society formed of the most bigoted Mussulmans, whose principle of action seems to be to do all the harm in their power to the Christians, and as it embraces nearly all the prominent Mussulmans, they exercise an undesirable influence on the local authorities. It was discovered last summer that the members of this society were instigating their co-religionists to take refuge in the town, and a further proof has just been furnished of their complicity in this movement by the Mahometan inhabitants of a village petitioning the Government to stop the intrigues of these men, protesting that they lived on good terms with their Christian neighbours and were anxious to remain at home. The Governor-General, Samih Pasha, has gone himself to Rethymo in the hope of calming the excitement there.

There is a steady influx of Moslem families into this town and into the neighbouring villages and homesteads. The panic which had seized them in August and September had subsided, and most of the refugees had returned, but the anarchy reigning in the country and the bad news from abroad have again worked on their fears, and many are retracing their steps. The Christians in this vicinity suffer themselves also by the

movement, as they are frequently beaten and maltreated by the new-comers, some of whom squat on their land, allow their sheep to destroy their growing crops, and in some instances cut down their trees for firewood. The Governor has posted companies of regular troops in several of the surrounding villages, and their presence certainly contributes to a sense of security, but it fails to procure redress for those who are beaten or robbed. The danger is lest the peasants who have been maltreated should induce the Christians in the interior to retaliate on the Mussulmans scattered amongst them. As an act of policy the former have carefully refrained from molesting them.

Her Majesty's ship "Rupert" arrived in Suda Bay yesterday, where her presence for the moment seems desirable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—January 1, 1878. In consequence of a telegram received from the Consular Agent in Rethymo describing the threatening attitude of the Mussulmans of that town, whose numbers have been augmented by many armed peasants, I desired Captain Gordon, of Her Majesty's ship "Rupert," to call in there to-day on his way to join the Admiral in the Bay of Smyrna, where his instructions require him to proceed.

T. B. S.

No. 63.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 1. Political. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 1, 1878.*

YESTERDAY I had a conversation with M. Cogalniceano, the substance of which he wished me to communicate confidentially to your Lordship.

The Minister informed me that the Roumanian Government has every reason to believe that at the conclusion of peace Russia will make an endeavour to recover the strip of Bessarabia which was ceded to Turkey by the Treaty of 1856.

This Government has received no communication, official or semi-official, on the matter, but no doubt is entertained upon the subject.

M. Cogalniceano went so far as to say that their only hope rested upon the generosity of the Emperor, and that, considering that the Roumanians had given their blood, &c., in the present contest, perhaps His Majesty might not press for the cession in question.

The Minister continued that hints had been thrown out respecting a plebiscite in Bessarabia, which might save appearances, but that it was well known that plebiscites of this nature were a mere form; that the cession of the Dobrudja had also been mentioned as a possible compensation, but that the latter would, in fact, be no real compensation, &c. He laid stress upon the disadvantage, in a European point of view, to the impolicy of Russia having ports on the Danube, and much more of the common-place features of the question, with which it is no use to take up your Lordship's time.

The Minister also informed me that he is sounding Count Andrassy upon the subject, adding that Austria is far more interested than any other Power in the retention of the territory in question by Roumania.

I remarked that the Roumanian Government having carried on hostile operations against one of the Guaranteeing Powers, and having made a Convention of a military character with another, placed this Government in a position which could only lead to the question being dealt with in the manner which might be deemed most expedient to such Powers as should be directly or indirectly concerned in a Treaty of Peace.

I pointed out to M. Cogalniceano that the Roumanian Government, instead of being contented with the general guarantees of the Powers which signed the Treaty of Paris, had gone out of their way to enter into a Convention with Russia, the last Article of which undertook to respect the existing condition of the united Principalities, and that by so doing this Government had doubtless forfeited a moiety of their claim to consideration at the hands of the Guaranteeing Powers.

M. Cogalniceano answered that they had hoped that the Article in the Convention in question would have sheltered them from this impending humiliation and misfortune; that, had that Article not been inserted, he, the Minister, never would have been a party to the transaction; and that he had confidently expected that Russia would have held

to the declaration, expectations which now seemed to be upon the brink of disappointment.

In conclusion, I told M. Cogalniceano that I had no knowledge of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon this subject, but that I should, in compliance with his desire, bring the subject under your Lordship's notice.

M. Cogalniceano then became eloquent respecting the detestation in which the Russians are held by all classes in these principalities, adding that, for the future, they should well know who had been their true friends.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 64.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 2. Political. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 1, 1878.*

THE days since the return of Prince Charles to the capital have been passed in expressions of mutual admiration between His Highness and the various public bodies and functionaries, and it was not until yesterday that I was able to see the Prince.

I was anxious to take an early opportunity of doing so, as various rumours have been circulated that it is contemplation to proclaim Prince Charles King of the Roumanians, in which case I could not of course have been able to ask for an audience.

The Prince describes the state of Bulgaria, owing to the immense quantity of snow, such as to preclude all possibility of military operations; a portion of each of the bridges across the Danube is, during some hours of each day, removed to allow the passage of floating ice, an arrangement which naturally offers great obstacles to the provisioning of the Russian Army, but he believes that there is a uniform supply for three weeks in advance.

The Prince discussed at considerable length the prospects and conditions of peace, and laid much emphasis upon the destruction of the Turkish fortresses upon the Danube, as being a standing menace to this country, and as incompatible with the neutralization and free navigation of that river; but His Highness, it is to be presumed, does not choose to remember that aggression has invariably arisen from the left bank of the Danube, and that not a shot was initiated from the Turkish fortresses until this Government had proclaimed themselves in a state of hostilities with the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 65.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 9.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 7 Janvier, 1878.*

INFORMATIONS sur les armées Russes: Par suite de la destruction des ponts, le transport des vivres et des munitions continuent à rencontrer de grandes difficultés, de même les transports des canons de gros calibre destinés à l'armée du Général Todleben, composée de 60,000 hommes, et qui doit attaquer Roustchouk. Cette armée venant de Roustchouk ne peut non plus rejoindre les troupes du Général Zimmerman. On présume donc que ces dernières chercheront à surprendre Varna. Le Général Gourko a reçu jusqu'à présent ordre d'attaquer et de rejeter les troupes Ottomanes à l'est et au sud de Sophia. Le Général Todleben a reçu jusqu'à présent ordre de hâter l'attaque contre Roustchouk et faire venir par Galatz des canons de gros calibre. Les Russes font venir de la Gallicie des munitions déclarées comme vivres. Le Prince Milan vient de demander télégraphiquement au quartier-général Russe des canons de gros calibre pour bombarder Nich.

No. 66.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 9.)

Constantinople, le 8 Janvier, 1878.

(Télégraphique.)

PAR mon télégramme d'hier j'ai fait savoir à votre Excellence que les Russes redoublaient d'efforts pour forcer les Balkans en Roumélie et s'emparer d'Erzéroum en Asie. **D'après nos dernières informations, leurs opérations contre Erzéroum avancent** rapidement, et leurs troupes de la Turquie d'Europe, ayant franchi les Balkans en huit colonnes par le défilé de Chipka et ses environs, menacent Andrinople. Veuillez signaler d'urgence ce qui précède à Lord Derby et me télégraphier immédiatement sa réponse.

No. 67.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 18.)

Pera, January 8, 1878, 11 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Consul Blunt to-day:—

"Les Russes marchant vers Yeni-Zaghra et autorité militaire croyant devoir prendre **mesures pour défense éventuelle d'Andrinople, Vali autorise départ familles indigènes et** répondit à la demande Consuls en conseillant aviser leurs nationaux. Même dépêche envoyée par nos collègues."

No. 68.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 19.)

Pera, January 9, 1878, 10 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs following dated yesterday:—

"Telegraphic communication between Kyzanlik and Yeni-Zaghra interrupted this morning. It is reported that Turkish troops at Shipka have retired on Carlova. Another Russian column debouched yesterday morning through Mutlis and the Russian force in Tundja valley is estimated at sixty battalions. Russian patrols have been seen within two hours of Yeni-Zaghra. Suspected that a Russian column is marching on Slimnia to take Kazan Pass in rear. Mahommedan inhabitants are quitting this town in great numbers for Rodosto and Constantinople, and pressing appeals from Philippopolis, Yeni-Zaghra, and Yamboli have been sent from authorities and inhabitants for trains to bring them away. The panic is universal."

No. 69.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 21.)

Pera, January 9, 1878, 11 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

MEHEMET ALI PASHA left this morning to take command at Adrianople.

No. 70.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10, 1878.)

(No. 1526.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 29*, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1523 of the 28th instant, I have the honour to state that the Sultan has named not three, but five Christians to be his Aides-de-camp. The inclosed extract from the "Turquie" gives their names, and the addresses made to them by His Majesty, when they were presented to him at the "Selamlik," or public audience, yesterday.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 70.

Extract from "La Turquie" of December 29, 1877.

LA cérémonie du "Sélamlik" a eu lieu hier à la mosquée Médjidié.

Ainsi que nous l'avons annoncé hier, Yorgaki Bey d'Aristarchi, Elias Effendi, Directeur des Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Edgar Bey Duz-oglou, Costaki Effendi Pangiri et Salomon Effendi Hatem ont été nommés par Iradé Impérial Aides-de-**camp de Sa Majesté le Sultan, les deux premiers avec le grade de Lieutenant et les trois** autres avec le grade de Sergent-Major.

Les nouveaux Aides-de-camp, après avoir été présentés hier au Palais de Yildiz, ont accompagné Sa Majesté à la cérémonie du Sélamlik.

Après la prière, le Sultan a fait exprimer à ses nouveaux Aides-de-camp, par l'entremise du premier Secrétaire Safvet Pacha, sa haute satisfaction de voir établie, dans toutes les classes de ses sujets, l'égalité de droit civil et militaire.

Voici en résumé les paroles Impériales qui ont été transmises par Son Excellence aux Aides-de-camp non-Musulmans:—

"Je suis heureux de pouvoir constater que les communautés non-Musulmanes de mon Empire, lesquelles jusqu'ici n'avient pu participer au privilége des armes, se trouvent aujourd'hui unies dans les mêmes droits et privilèges qui tendent à raffermir les bases de la **Constitution que j'ai octroyée à tous mes sujets sans distinction de race ni de religion.** Quoique la Constitution ait parfaitement défini l'égalité des droits militaires et civils, à cause des circonstances actuelles ce n'est qu'aujourd'hui que la question de l'incorporation dans l'armée de mes sujets non-Musulmans a pris un commencement d'exécution. Mes Ministres sont chargés d'apporter tous les soins nécessaires à ce que cette nouvelle réforme puisse être mise en pratique un moment plus tôt. J'aime à espérer que mes sujets non-Musulmans seront satisfaits tout aussi bien que moi en voyant que cette lacune est comblée."

No. 71.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10, 1878.)

(No. 1529.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 31*, 1877.

WITH reference to Mr. James' letters to your Lordship, copies of which were transmitted to me in your Nos. 596 and 863 of the 13th October and 19th instant, I beg to observe that the statement contained in my despatch of the 13th May last, presented to Parliament, as to invented "Bulgarian outrages," was made in the discharge of my duty as Her Majesty's Ambassador, and I must decline either to withdraw or to substantiate it. It was in general terms, and was not directed to any person individually. For obvious reasons I cannot disclose my authority for it; but Mr. James will, no doubt, find, if he thinks proper to inquire, that the matter was one of public notoriety here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 72.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10, 1878.)

(No. 1530.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 31*, 1877.

I REPRESENTED, some days ago, to the Grand Vizier that executions of Bulgarians alleged to have been implicated in the recent insurrection were still taking place, and that the Sultan's proclamation offering pardon to the Bulgarians had not yet been published at Adrianople. His Highness now informs me that the most peremptory orders have been sent by His Majesty to the authorities in the Provinces of Bulgaria and Roumelia to put an end at once to all executions, and to publish his proclamation without further delay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 73.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10, 1878.)

(No. 1533.)

Constantinople, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,

THE case referred to in your Lordship's despatch No. 882 of the 20th instant of the hanging at Varna of a Bulgarian named Dragoilo Nidelichu Rahesto, upon an unfounded charge of being a Russian spy, has been brought by me to the notice of the Porte, as I informed your Lordship in my despatch No. 1,457 of the 8th instant. The military authorities at Varna, who have been called upon by the Grand Vizier to give full explanations as to their conduct in this matter, have not yet sent an answer. At my request his Highness has repeated his orders to them to-day in a peremptory form.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 74.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 4. Very Confidential.)

Constantinople, January 1, 1878.

My Lord,

ACCORDING to the existing regulations, the newly-elected Chamber of Deputies presented the names of three of its members to the Sultan, from whom His Majesty has to choose its President. His Majesty's selection has fallen upon Hassan Fehmi Effendi, one of the Members for Constantinople, a lawyer, said to be an able and honest man, but without experience of public affairs, unknown to the country, and not likely to have authority or influence in the Assembly. Sheikh Baha-Eddin Effendi, the Deputy for Brousa, and Allahverdi-Zadé Ohannes Effendi, a Catholic Armenian, have been named respectively first and second Vice-Presidents.

The Chamber has not yet held any public session. It has met with closed doors to prepare the answer to the Sultan's speech. The Members of the new Parliament appear to be ready to show the same independence and determination to deal with public affairs as those of the last. I learn from some of them that the discussions upon the address to His Majesty have been most stormy. A large majority of the Chamber have insisted upon inserting in it words condemning the policy of the Ministers, and accusing them of being the authors of the disasters which have befallen the country since the previous Parliament was dissolved. Should they succeed in expressing this censure upon the Government, it is believed that it will either lead to the resignation of the Ministry, or to the dissolution of the Chambers. It is really directed against the Sultan, and what is known as "the Palace." I understood that no secret was made of the fact in the discussions that have taken place. The persons who surround the Sultan, and who are supposed to have such complete influence over His Majesty as to control all State affairs, were denounced in terms which are said to have exceeded the constitutional rights of the Chamber. An attempt is being made to prevent the insertion in the address of words which convey the public discontent; but it is known out of doors that in the debates which have taken place the conduct of the Palace party and of the Government has been severely criticised and condemned.

There is no doubt that the public feeling with regard to Mahmoud Damat Pasha, Said Pasha, the Sultan's first secretary or "Bash Kiatib" (not to be confounded with the General Said Pasha), and other persons about His Majesty's person, is becoming every day more exasperated, and may lead to serious consequences, not only to them but to the Sultan himself, unless something be done to allay it. The Sultan, with all his good qualities and admirable intentions, is timid and suspicious. It is scarcely surprising that he should be so, considering the circumstances under which he came to the throne, the grave events that are occurring around him, and the utter want of experienced and able statesmen to whom he could look with confidence for advice and assistance. My own impression, judging from what His Majesty has more than once said to me, is that neither Mahmoud Damat Pasha nor the chief secretary exercises any real influence over him. He knows their characters, and mistrusts them. But they are in a position to play upon his fears. They can give him to understand that to them and their party he owes his throne, and that without their support he may lose it, and even his life at the same time. With this object they take advantage of the intrigues which are being carried on in favour of his deposed brother Murad, who, the public is being gradually led to believe, is restored to

reason, and is unjustly and unlawfully deprived of his rights, although I have been assured on high authority that a Sultan once deposed by a legal decree cannot, according to the Mussulman and ancient Turkish law, be restored.

This hold which Mahmoud Damat Pasha and his confederates have upon the Sultan furnishes the key to the present state of affairs in the Palace. His Majesty has not the strength of character and moral courage to free himself altogether from them, although he has more than once hinted to me that he would gladly rid himself of them. By keeping them about him he is losing the popularity which his kindly disposition and many excellent qualities had justly gained for him with his subjects. The position which these persons hold in the Palace enables them to interfere in public affairs, whether the Sultan wishes it or not. As all public business passes through their hands they can indirectly influence his judgment, withhold important information from him, or induce him, by misrepresentations or by concealment of facts, to commit acts of injustice or indiscretion. They are able to promote the interests of those who are willing to be their creatures, and to promote to high and responsible places incapable and corrupt men. To their interference and evil counsels are attributed, not without reason, the reverses and disasters of the Turkish armies. They have upheld Suleiman Pasha, who is believed to have been the cause of these misfortunes. They brought about on two occasions the recall of Mehemet Ali Pasha. It was through them that the Council of War, recently abolished, compelled Mukhtar Pasha to continue in the positions on the Russian frontier which led to the destruction of his army, to the fall of Kars, and to the loss of the greater part of Armenia. They prevented Osman Pasha leaving Plevna when, after his first victories, he might have retired in safety with his army; and yet the Sultan himself has told me that he has no confidence in Suleiman Pasha, whom, I believe, he personally dislikes, whilst he is very favourably disposed to Mehemet Ali Pasha, whom he intended, at one time, to name Minister of War. But Suleiman Pasha is befriended by Mahmoud Damat Pasha and the "Palace party;" and although to his incapacity and to his jealousy of Mehemet Ali Pasha and other commanders have been attributed the fall of Plevna and the successes of the Russians in Bulgaria, he is still maintained in the supreme command. Mehemet Ali Pasha informs me that when, through the intrigues of his rival, he was recently recalled from the army in Bosnia and Western Roumelia, he earnestly advised that the forces in the Orkhanie Pass, and scattered in small detachments at Pirot and other places, should at once be ordered to fall back and to concentrate at Sofia, or elsewhere on the road to Adrianople, he was overruled by Suleiman Pasha. Now, when the Russians may have cut off the retreat of Shakir Pasha's army, and the scattered battalions have already fallen into the hands of the Russians and the Servians, orders have been given for their withdrawal. Yet notwithstanding all the disasters that Suleiman Pasha has thus brought upon his country, he receives the highest honours, because Mahmoud Damat Pasha and his adherents require a soldier who will enable them to retain the power they now possess. He is known to be a man of great and unscrupulous ambition, and to be aiming at the highest office in the State.

The Sultan, mistrusting his Ministers and those who are about him, and wishing to inform himself of all that is passing, has had recourse to the dangerous expedient of entering into secret correspondence with persons in the capital and the provinces. I have been informed, on the best authority, that it was discovered a short time ago that one of his correspondents was a clerk in the Foreign Office at the Porte. He is constantly sending his Aides-de-camp to the different armies to report to him upon their condition. I understand that he insisted, against the advice of Raouf Pasha, upon the recall of Moukhtar Pasha, because he had received private information which induced him to believe that that General was unpopular with his officers and men, and that, consequently, he could not be depended upon to hold Erzeroum to the last extremity. He is in direct telegraphic communication, which, however, passes through the hands of those employed at the Palace, with the different Commanders. This interference with military affairs cannot be but dangerous. However, every now and then, His Majesty asserts his power in a right direction, and his recent nomination of Raouf Pasha and General Said Pasha, both declared enemies of Suleiman Pasha and the Palace clique, to the Ministries of War and Marine, has given general satisfaction. What the Sultan requires is a Grand Vizier of energy, firmness, and ability, whom he can respect, if not fear, and who can guide and control him. Unfortunately, Edhem Pasha, who now holds that high office, although an honest man and earnestly desirous to do his best for the welfare of his country, is deficient in those essential qualities. Consequently, His Majesty is little inclined to listen to him and to follow his counsels.

On the other hand, the Sultan would be unwilling to have as his Grand Vizier a man of a resolute and determined will, lest he should fall into the power of his Minister. His

Majesty looks with suspicion upon Midhat Pasha, for whom he has a personal dislike, principally, I believe, on account of the share taken by that statesman in the dethronement of Sultans Abdul Aziz and Murad. He has been led to think that Midhat will not forgive his banishment from Turkey, and that if the opportunity were given him he would revenge himself upon the authors of it, including his Sovereign. His Majesty sent for Ahmed Vefyk Pasha immediately after his return from Adrianople, assured him of his entire confidence, and declared his intention to employ him in a position of great trust and responsibility. Ahmed Vefyk Pasha replied that whilst ready to place his services at the entire disposal of His Majesty, he believed that for many reasons it would be more to His Majesty's interest that he should be permitted to remain in retirement. The Sultan then asked whether there were no mark of his favour which the Pasha would be willing to accept. Ahmed Vefyk Pasha answered that if His Majesty thought fit to name him a Senator, he would do his best to serve His Majesty in that capacity. The Sultan, Ahmed Vefyk Pasha told me, seemed much relieved by his reply, and at once acceded to his request. His Majesty had wished to have him as President of the Chamber, but his firm and independent character does not suit "the Palace," and the intrigues to prevent his election as one of the members for Constantinople were successful. Ahmed Vefyk Pasha has stated to me his determination not to take any office until Mahmoud Damat Pasha and his partizans are no longer in a position to exercise, directly or indirectly, their pernicious influence over the Sultan.

The state of things that I have described has led to the great discontent now existing in the public mind, and especially amongst those who form what is known as "the Porte," and who have hitherto practically had the administration of public affairs. They find themselves deprived of all power and influence. Their decisions on public matters, which are sent to the Palace for the sanction of the Sultan, in former times rarely refused, are now overridden, or put aside, through some secret influence. In many cases those decisions may not reach His Majesty: in others, his mind may have been prejudiced against them, and he may have declined to confirm them. It should be the duty of the Grand Vizier to warn His Majesty against the danger of the course that he is thus led to pursue, and to resign his office if his advice be not taken. He is considered by the Turkish people to be, after the Sultan, almost all powerful. But Edhem Pasha has not the courage to avail himself of his high position, and he bows with submission to the will of his master. When a short time ago, at the earnest request of the Sultan, he was about to withdraw his resignation which he had sent in, I ventured to suggest to him that he should make his conditions now that it was in his power to do so, and endeavour to put an end to the influences in the Palace of which he complained. His Highness only replied that "it was very difficult to make conditions with a Sovereign."

I am disposed to ascribe the present unsatisfactory condition of things mainly to the unfortunate direction that has been given to the policy of the Great Powers with regard to Turkey. Formerly one of two foreign influences were predominant in this country—that of England and that of Russia. I may venture to assert broadly that the one was an influence for good, the other for evil, as far as this country was concerned. Unhappily of late years the latter has prevailed, and the progress and improvement which were gradually but surely taking place in the condition of both the Mussulman and Christian populations were suddenly arrested. If England were to return to her ancient policy with respect to the Turkish Empire—a policy which tended so greatly to the welfare of the Christians, whom some other Powers from motives of policy pretended to protect, but in whose prosperity and advancement they had no real concern—I should not despair of being able to remove from the Palace those whose evil counsels and bad influence over the Sultan have caused, and are now causing, such terrible calamities to his subjects. But under present circumstances my task is a most difficult one, for it is my duty to avoid doing anything which may encourage the Sultan or his people to look for help from England, or which, on the other hand, might so far discourage them that in their despair they might throw themselves entirely into the arms of Russia, and make concessions to obtain peace which would be fatal to our interests.

As the state of things in Constantinople is no doubt critical, and as any day might witness an explosion of public opinion dangerous not only to those who are supposed to have the secret direction of public affairs, but even to the Sultan himself, I have ventured to place before your Lordship unreservedly what I believe to be the present situation of affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 75.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 30.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 10, 1878.*

ANSWER from the Grand Duke Michael simply acknowledges receipt of Minister of War's telegram.

No. 76.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 10, 1878, 3·20 P.M.*

GRAND DUKE NICOLAS telegraphs from Loftcha, 9th January, that on that day General Radetski took whole Turkish army at Shipka after a violent battle; in all 41 battalions, 10 batteries, and 1 regiment of cavalry, under command of Vessel Pasha, surrendered. Prince Mirski occupies Kyzanlik, and Skobeleff Shipka village.

No. 77.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 10, 1878.*

COUNT ANDRASSY having gone to shoot in Hungary, where he will remain till Saturday, I have communicated to Baron Calice a memorandum of the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, to be forwarded to his Excellency. A telegram received from Count Zichy represents Porte to be alarmed, from the language of Prince Reuss, lest Rustchuk, and perhaps other fortresses, may be asked for as conditions of the armistice. The Turkish Embassy having been instructed to intimate to Commander at Widdin that he is to suspend hostilities, has applied for good offices of Austrian Government to transmit the message, but there will be apparently some difficulty in doing so, even if Austrian Consul has not already left fortress.

No. 78.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 1878.)

(No. 150. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December 30, 1877.*

AS the correspondent of the "Times" in Montenegro telegraphed from Ragusa on the 9th instant that the leading Mussulmans in Scutari had held a meeting in which it had been decided that, unless the Porte speedily took measures to establish order and security, they should invoke the protection of one of the Powers, an honour which the meeting finally accorded to Italy, I venture to furnish your Lordship with the following explanations on this subject:—

When it became apparent here that the Ottoman Government was unable to send sufficient reinforcements for the Turkish Generals to attempt to dislodge the Montenegrins from the positions they had acquired in the district of Antivari and on the western shores of Lake Scutari, the Mohammedan Albanians of this town commenced to fear seriously that Scutari might fall into the hands of Montenegro, and they began to discuss among themselves how this could be avoided.

Three influential Scutarins Mohammedans shortly afterwards called upon M. Berio, the Italian Consul, and explained that they had come to obtain from him, on behalf of themselves and their fellow-townsmen, an opinion as to the probable course of passing events.

They asked whether he thought Prince Nicholas intended taking Scutari; whether the European Powers would tolerate such a proceeding; and what had best be done. To all these questions M. Berio replied that he was really unable to give an answer, from the fact that he had no data to go upon. His visitors then expressed the belief that it would

be better for Scutari to fall into the hands of some European Government rather than to become a part of Montenegro. They said that Austria would probably be held back from taking North Albania by Russia; that England would possibly, owing to religious reasons, not be grateful to the Roman Catholic Albanians; and that, therefore, Italy would be the most natural support to lean upon.

My Italian colleague assures me that he replied that his Government had no wish nor intention to acquire possessions on this side of the Adriatic, and that his visitors left him in the same perplexity as when they came to call on him.

I am, however, of opinion that importance to this matter has been given by persons in Italian interests, and in order to act upon Austrian fears, for there can be little doubt that Austria has ulteror views upon North Albania, otherwise she would not proclaim on every occasion her right to protect its Christian inhabitants, and keep in her pay the whole of the Albanian Roman Catholic Clergy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 79.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 1878.)

(No. 151. Political.)

Scutari, December 30, 1877.

My Lord,

ALI SAIB PASHA informed me yesterday that the majority of the inhabitants, whether Christians or Mahommedans, of the villages which have fallen into the hands of the Montenegrins, have taken service under Prince Nicholas.

His Excellency assured me that, after the fight near Katerkol, nine or ten M m-medan peasants of the district were found among the Montenegrin dead.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 80.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 1878.)

(No. 152. Political.)

Scutari, December 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copies of two despatches addressed by me to Mr. Layard on the subject of the desertion from the camp at Gorica of the Bashi-Bazouks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 80.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, December 29, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Bashi-Bazouks who still remained with the Turkish troops at Gorica have abandoned their posts and have come to Scutari, alleging as an excuse that they are not able to withstand the inclemency of the weather. Prudence has obliged the Pashas to desist from attempting to prevent by force the return of the Bashi-Bazouks to their homes.

The villages on the western bank of the River Boyana and in the neighbourhood of Dulcigno are being pillaged and burnt by the Montenegrins.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 80.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, December 30, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 87 of yesterday, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that on the 28th instant the Turkish troops at Gorica made a movement in advance towards Katerkol. The day was most unpropitious, as a gale was blowing from the north, accompanied by continuous heavy rain and sleet.

No enemy having been observed at Katerkol, and no shelter being available there for the troops, they were marched back to Gorica; but the whole of the Bashi-Bazouks, numbering about 1,500 men, instead of returning to their quarters, continued their march towards Scutari, declaring that they had had enough of fighting against the inclemencies of the weather instead of against an enemy.

Their desertion having been telegraphed to this, a battalion of Chasseurs was hurriedly marched with two guns to the head of the bridge on this side of the Boyana.

Next morning a parley ensued between the Pashas and the Bashi-Bazouks on the other end of the bridge, which resulted in their being allowed to enter Scutari, on the distinct promise that, after they had recruited their strength by a few days' rest, they would return to the Gorica camp.

Ali Saib Pasha assured me that he never applied for the contingent of irregulars, which was collected by the civil authorities, and that he considers its presence amongst his troops a weakness rather than a support. He will do nothing further to prevent the Bashi-Bazouks all going back to their homes.

I believe that some of the authorities are interested in keeping up an irregular force, as a door is thus left open for endless peculation in the matter of its maintenance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 81.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 1. Political.)

Adrianople, January 1, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, herewith, for the information of your Lordship, a copy of a despatch, with a copy of its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the continuance of executions and banishments of Bulgarians by the authorities of this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, January 1, 1878.

Sir,

THIS morning I had the honour to telegraph to your Excellency as follows:—

"I am told that, in consequence of orders from Porte within the last two weeks, the following number of Bulgarian notables have been arrested and sent to Constantinople:—

"Eighteen from Slimnia, four from Yambol, one from Bourgas, and three from here.

"They were not, so far as I can learn, tried by court-martial or by the ordinary local courts."

I have the honour to inclose a list of the names of these persons.

With reference to the three notables of Adrianople, namely, Petko Agha, Grouïo Agha, and Apostol Agha, I should add that all three were members of the local courts. Petko Agha was a member of the Idaré Medjlissi (Administrative Council), Grouïo Agha, of the Divani-Temiz (Supreme Court of Appeal of the Vilayet), and Apostol Agha, of the Temizi-Houkouk (Criminal Court).

Although I am not certain whether the deported notables of Slimnia, Yambol, and Bourgas were tried by the court-martial of Slimnia, having failed as yet to obtain any positive information on this point as regards them, I am in a position to say that they were

not tried in Adrianople. They were detained here only one evening and then despatched to Constantinople.

I am further informed, but cannot vouch for the statement, that a Bulgarian was recently arrested, on whom were found compromising letters addressed by them to the Russian military authorities at Tirnova.

The arrest of the three notables of Adrianople has caused quite a sensation here. There appears to have been no charge against them, and it is now reported to me that, after undergoing examination at Constantinople, they have been liberated, though placed under police surveillance.

I learn that, since the departure from here of Ahmet Vefyk Pasha, many Bulgarians who had been tried and condemned to death by the court-martial have been sent to different towns of this province and executed. I have not yet been able to procure an exact list of the persons so dealt with; but I am told that, in the town of Mustafa Pasha alone, twenty Bulgarians have been executed within the last three weeks, and that others have been sent to, and executed at, Demotica, Tevré, and other places.

I have reason to believe that Djemil Pasha, the present Governor-General, is adverse to further executions of Bulgarians, and has made representations in this sense to the Porte, recommending, at the same time, the recall of Colonel Kadri Bey, the President of the Court-Martial, who has, I am sorry to say, gained a reputation for uncompromising and undiscriminating severity.

I have reason to believe that, on the representations of Djemil Pasha, Kadri Bey actually received from the Seraskierate notice of recall; but Suleiman Pasha, on arriving here, reappointed him, thereby approving and encouraging his line of action. This has given rise, I learn, to some coolness between Djemil and Suleiman Pashas, to remove which one of the Sultan's Secretaries is expected to arrive here this evening from Constantinople.

I need not point out to your Excellency that it is from every point of view desirable that this protracted series of executions and deportations should cease, and be followed by a policy of clemency and conciliation. It is to be feared that, if continued, they will provoke the Bulgarians, in such districts on this side of the Balkans as may fall into the hands of the Russians, to commit cruelties, if possible, more atrocious than I have described in my last report.

The feeling of some of the leading Turks here is strongly in favour of conciliatory measures, and they think that the sooner such a course is adopted the better it will be for Turks and Bulgarians alike.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

Names of Bulgarians who have been deported from Yambol, Bourgas, Slimnia, and Adrianople.

FROM Yambol: Hadji Ilia, Hadji Panayotoglou Ghiorghi, Coslovski, Conerof: four in all.

From Bourgas: Bracaloff.

From Slimnia: Rousicho Mirovitch, Stephan Sari Yovanoglu, his son-in-law, Panayotaki, Stetchko oglou Zaharia, Doctor Natcho, Hadji Manologlou, Hadji Dimitri, Boyadji Hadji Petri, Boyadji Hadji Thodor, Selogiou Yavanicho, Andonaki Ionnoff, Andonaki Hambam, Paraskova Benoff, Bakal Hadji Stephan, Sutirioglou Nedeltcho, Karamanlikoglou Ghiorghi, Mikso Dimitri, Panayot Minoff, Boyo-oglou Dimitrako: eighteen in al

From Adrianople: Petko Agha, Gramiloglou Agha, and Apostol Agha: three in all.

No. 82.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 11.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 4, 1878.

ACCORDING to the last reports that I have received from Sofia, the town had been almost entirely abandoned by the civil population. The cruelties committed by the

Russians and Bulgarians last year in the Tundja Valley, and other districts in Roumelia, have caused so great an alarm to the Mussulmans that they fly in all directions on the approach of the invaders. The Christians, on the other hand, fearing to fall the victims of the Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks, endeavour to reach places where they may be under the protection of the Turkish authorities. The large number of fugitives who had taken refuge in Sofia have been compelled to renew their wanderings, without food or shelter, in this most inclement season.

A report, addressed to me by Mr. Master, who has been employed in the distribution of Baroness Burdett-Coutts' "Compassionate Fund" (a copy of which I inclose), will give your Lordship some idea of the misery to which these unfortunate creatures are exposed. Thousands of them will, no doubt, perish in the plains of Roumelia, now deep in snow.

Most of the houses and shops in Sofia have been closed. Some pillaging has already taken place, notwithstanding the presence of the Turkish authorities, and it is feared that the place will be sacked as soon as the regular troops retire, on the approach of the Russians, which they will probably do, as the town cannot be defended against the force that is advancing against it. Sofia contains very large supplies of provisions and munitions of war which cannot be removed. It was, I believe, the intention of the Turkish Commander to set fire to the town in order to destroy them; but this will not, I am assured, be done, in consequence of the large number of sick and wounded in it, amounting to about 8,000.

Lady Strangford, who is at Sofia in charge of an hospital connected with the Red Crescent Association, informs me that she intends to remain there after it has been abandoned by the Turkish troops. I very much regret her determination, but I trust she will not be exposed to any danger, and will receive proper protection and good treatment from the Russian military authorities.

The destruction of a flourishing town of some 80,000 inhabitants will be added to the benefits conferred by this war upon the Bulgarians, for whom it is waged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 82.

Mr. Master to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 3, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that I returned from Sofia on the 1st January. It had been my intention to remain there during the winter, but I had suddenly to leave on account of the approach of the Russian troops to within a few miles of the town. I have been working at Sofia about a month, and I reckon that there were about 2,400 refugees, mostly Turks. These people were relieved by me every day, each person receiving a pint-and-a-half of good strong soup, and enough firewood to keep them warm. I also gave them warm clothing in the shape of blankets, shoes, socks, flannel, and calico. Most of these people came from Plevna and Lowatz, and were in a most miserable condition, some of them having hardly any clothing to cover themselves with. I must mention that I also distributed clothing to the Jewish refugees—about 450 of them; they also received money to buy food as, of course, they would not come to the soup kitchen; the money was given to the Rabbi, who saw that it was properly expended.

The soup kitchen was a great success and the cost very moderate—about a penny each person per day. I received a great deal of assistance from the Government; a Commission appointed by them sat all day, and as soon as a family of refugees arrived into the town they were taken before the Commissioners, who inquired into their case, found out all particulars concerning them, the place they came from, the number of their family and their wants; the Commissioners then gave them a card, which they presented at the soup kitchen, and they also came to the store, where they received their clothing.

I am sorry that I am unable at present to give to your Excellency a full list containing the names of the persons relieved and the villages they came from, as I had to leave many papers behind, also my baggage, on account of my sudden departure, but these, I hope, will all be forwarded on, as I left them in charge of M. Durand, a French gentleman who has worked well for the fund, and has given me a great deal of assistance.

My hospital and home were just opened when I had to leave; the hospital contained

forty-five beds, and the home would hold about eighty people. I left a few poor sick women and children in the hospital, and they will be well taken care of by M. Durand.

In the middle of the night of the 27th ultimo a report came into the town that the Russian troops, numbering some 20,000 men, were within a few miles of Sofia; a number of refugees were also said to be on their way. I at once set to work and prepared the home for their reception, lighting good fires and providing food for them upon their arrival. knew that the next morning there would be a panic in the town, and that the inhabitants and refugees would all be leaving, so I took measures to insure their all having food and blankets before they started. I ordered 2,000 okes of bread, this I distributed to the refugees as they were leaving; I also gave them the remaining blankets I had in hand, and to each family I gave a little money.

The scene at the konak on the morning of the 28th was a most extraordinary and painful one, thousands of women and children imploring the authorities to give them carts so that they might leave the town. The Government placed at my disposal fifty carts and sledges; these were all that could be obtained at the time. I filled these carts and sent them on their way to Tatar-Bazardjik; a few more carts were obtained later in the day, and the remaining refugees had to leave the best way they could. The panic in the town was now at its height; the Jews were all leaving, carrying their goods and chattels upon their backs, making their way it is said for Salonica. The poor women and children crowded round me, imploring for my assistance. What could I do beyond saying a few words to try and cheer them, and giving them bread, blankets, and a little money; as regards the latter, I had intended not giving money to any refugee, but if I have gone beyond my instructions, I hope your Excellency will forgive me, as I could not stand by and see these poor people leave without anything. The Government had sent away all their official papers, and the different offices were empty; the Governor of the town was also preparing to leave, and the shops were all shut and in some cases broken open and looted. The cold was intense; the thermometer marked 17 degrees below zero the night before.

I am afraid that some of the little children must have died upon the road from cold; I did all I could for them, and if it had been possible I would have remained with them, but as I did not want to be captured by the Russians, I left the town on the morning of the 29th, leaving all my baggage behind me. I am now ready to start again, and I would suggest to your Excellency that I should proceed to Tatar-Bazardjik and there start a soup kitchen and home similar to the one at Sofia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT MASTER.

No. 83.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 13.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 4, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Consul Blunt upon the military situation in Roumelia and the depressed state of feeling existing among the authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Adrianople, January 2, 1878.*

DJEMIL PASHA told me this morning that a telegram was received yesterday evening from Sofia, viâ Kustendil and Salonica, stating that the Russo-Servian corps, which was reported to have taken up a position within four hours of Sofia, made a further advance (date not given), and attacked some works two hours nearer to that town, and situated in a position commanding the road to Sharkioi (Pirot). The Turkish troops repulsed the attack and pursued the enemy up to their positions, which, however, they did not succeed in taking, and had to retire within their lines.

I found Djemil Pasha discouraged at the march of events, and a feeling of despondency is manifest among the leading members of the Administration.

Suleiman Pasha, with whom I had a conversation after my visit to the Vali, also seems discouraged, and the remarks he made gave me the impression that he has no confidence in the present military situation. He frankly told me that "the best thing that could happen at this crisis was an armistice," and that, otherwise, he despaired of any military success.

He observed that there are so many ways through which the Russians can come into the valley of the Maritza and march upon Adrianople, that when they do so it will be difficult for him to resist with any chance of success with the present forces at his disposal, scattered as they are along a very extensive line of defence.

In the meantime, no troops have been sent to Adrianople; nor do I believe that its magazines are full, or that the authorities are taking any special measures to provide supplies in sufficient quantities to enable an army falling back upon Adrianople to make a protracted defence. All this, I am apprehensive, will be followed by very serious consequences. The people (I mean the Turks) are ready to make every possible sacrifice; and the troops, from all I hear, are not dispirited; but, owing to the absence of good generalship and to the growing dejection of the provincial authorities, I fear there is no prospect of much resistance being offered to a Russian advance upon this place.

As Suleiman Pasha, the Commander-in-chief, has established his head-quarters here, and Adrianople is becoming the centre of important military events, I would respectfully suggest to his Excellency that one of Her Majesty's Military Attachés should be sent here to watch and report upon them to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 84.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 11.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 9 Janvier, 1878.*

JE vous prie d'appeler l'attention de Lord Derby sur la gravité de notre situation et sur l'urgence d'arriver sans aucun retard à la conclusion d'un armistice pour lequel nous avons demandé par télégraphe aux deux Grands Ducs de vouloir bien désigner à chacun de nos deux Commandants d'Europe et d'Asie les noms des Commandants Russes chargés de cette négociation. Cette double dépêche est partie hier soir, et jusqu'à cette heure aucune réponse ne nous est parvenue. Lord Derby comprendra sans aucun doute que tout atermoiement pourrait aggraver la situation au point de menacer la capitale de l'Empire et de rendre plus difficile les négociations de paix.

No. 85.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(Immédiate.)
My Lord, *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 10 Janvier, 1878.*

JE m'empresse de transmettre, ci-joint, à votre Excellence, copie d'une nouvelle dépêche télégraphique que je reçois à l'instant de son Excellence Server Pacha; et je serais très-reconnaissant à votre Excellence, si elle voulait bien me mettre à même de télégraphier à mon Gouvernement son opinion sur cette communication.

Votre, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 85.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 10 Janvier, 1878.*

VOICI le télégramme responsif que nous venons de recevoir du Grand Duc Nicolas:—

"Le contenu de votre dépêche a été transmis à l'Empereur. Les négociations ne peuvent avoir lieu qu'avec moi directement; il ne saurait toutefois être question en ce moment d'armistice sans bases de paix."

Veuillez communiquer immédiatement cette dépêche à Lord Derby et me télégraphier sans retard l'opinion de sa Seigneurie.

No. 86.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 11, 1878.*

AUSTRIAN Ambassador at Porte expresses opinion in a telegram received this morning that Adrianople cannot be defended, and that Russian army can easily advance to Constantinople.

No. 87.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 32.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 12, 1878, 11·30 p.m.*

FOLLOWING is from General Kemball, dated Baiburt yesterday:—

"Armistice apparently fallen through. Authorities look for arrival of Russians here rather soon than late. There are only four indifferent battalions here and no artillery; without prospect of reinforcements or relief they can do no more than watch roads.

"Irregular cavalry at Kop and Mussat, but this cavalry worthless.

"Timely preparations ought to be made for retreat from Baiburt; defence out of the question."

No. 88.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 33.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 11, 1878, 12·45 p.m.*

HAMDI PASHA has been appointed Grand Vizier. He is a man of no influence and no great ability; consequently, as far as I can at present judge, scarcely fit for the position at this critical moment. The Ministers sleep at the Palace, and are in constant attendance upon the Sultan.

No further news as yet of the armistice.

No. 89.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 35.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 11, 1878, 3·25 p.m.*

VICE-CONSUL BROPHY telegraphs following to-day:—"Orders received for Mussulman population of Cazas of Burgas, Achiaki, and Misevria, to leave for Constantinople. Three frigates will be sent to embark them. Authorities here have no force to prevent serious disturbances, which are sure to occur."

No. 90.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 37.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 11, 1878, 5 p.m.*

FOLLOWING Ministerial changes:—Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, Minister of Public Instruction; Sultan's Secretary, Said Pasha, Minister of Interior; Kiani Pasha, Minister of Finance; Sudyk Pasha, Director of Customs.

No. 91.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 39.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 11, 1878.*

FOLLOWING received from Consul Blunt, dated to-day:—

"Five trains crowded with fugitives left Adrianople to-day for Constantinople. On arrival there many of the fugitives will be in need of immediate relief, as it is snowing, and most of them are in open trucks; two children died from cold at the station to-day. Situation worse, and I may have to leave this on Sunday. Shall go to Tchataldja."

No. 92.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, January 11, 1878.*

NISCH has been taken by the Servians last night with heavy loss, and Coushoum retaken by the Turks in the meantime.

No. 93.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Ragusa, January 11, 1878.*

AN official telegram from Cettigné announces the fall of the citadel of Antivari and surrender at discretion of the garrison.

No. 94.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1878.)

(No. 99. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, December 21, 1877.*

WITH reference to Mr. Vice-Consul Jago's despatch No. 16 of the 17th instant, I have the honour to express as my opinion, based on the information which reaches me from the districts of the vilayet, that the remarks of that gentleman apply generally to the whole of the province, as well as to the Consular district of Damascus, and I cannot but attribute this unsatisfactory state of affairs in some degree to the continued absence of a Governor-General, as, under present circumstances, the Commander-in-chief of the 5th Corps d'Armée must be too much engrossed in military matters to attend properly to the civil administration of the vilayet, with which he is charged as Acting Governor-General.

The insecurity of the country, as reported by Mr. Jago, is universal, and arises from the causes enumerated by that gentleman. I do not suppose that the appointment of a Wali, however energetic, honest, and intelligent he might be, would have the effect of entirely putting a stop to the present state of disorder and misrule, which, however, it would undoubtedly somewhat check.

It is certainly most remarkable that, notwithstanding the crisis through which Turkey is passing, the urban and settled rural populations in Syria have continued to be so well-behaved, as I have not heard of outbreaks of fanaticism in any part of the country, and the disorders are confined to a general insecurity of the roads, and acts of brigandage perpetrated for the most part by those who have succeeded in escaping from the recruiting officers, and those who have been driven by sheer want to take to the highways, for which the effects of the war are chiefly responsible.

However unsatisfactory the state of Syria in general may be considered, I beg to assure your Lordship that Mount Lebanon and the town and neighbourhood of Beyrout form exceptions to the rule, thanks to the enlightened administration of their Excellencies Rustem Pasha and Raif Effendi, their respective Ministers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 95.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1878.)

(No. 17. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, December 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, touching the proposed creation of a Civic Guard in this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Damascus, December 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, on the 20th instant, a Vizirial Order from Constantinople, announcing the creation of a "Garde Civique," together with the regulation affecting it, were publicly read at the Serail by Izzet Pasha, Mushir and Acting Governor-General, to the assembled notables and ecclesiastical dignitaries of all rites summoned for that purpose, amidst a vast concourse of people which rumour had gathered together. The reading was attended by the solemnity usually observed regarding Imperial Firmans.

The promulgation and the great latitude conferred on the authorities by the vague character of the Regulation have caused much excitement among all classes, and have greatly increased the antagonism to the Government of the Moslem multitude, which, while openly accusing Ministers of having, by their misdeeds, brought the country to its present condition, asserts its determination to resist the execution of a Regulation the execution of which, it maintains, gives the Government the right to draft off for foreign service almost every man in the country, and thus complete the destruction of the lives and fortunes of the people.

The Christians and Jews, whose disinclination and inaptitude for military service are second to none, have gained hopes of ultimate exemption by this attitude of their Moslem brethren.

The Governor-General, who is very reticent as to when the Regulation is to take effect, appears to take into proper account the utter want of means of repression, in case of open defiance, at his command; and, indeed, so far as I can judge, seems to regret the manner of its promulgation, and the natural consequence which has here attended it.

Beyond the reading, no steps have been taken in the matter, and all parties eagerly draw, from the present political situation, hopes that the Regulation may be dispensed with by the speedy dawn of peace in one shape or another.

Meanwhile I consider the local authorities too prudent to provoke collision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 96.

Sir R. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 2.)
My Lord, *Tunis, January 3, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to state that the Porte has telegraphed to the Bey to ascertain whether the Tunisian Contingent was ready, to which His Highness has replied that the troops were waiting for the arrival of the transports to convey them to their destination.

The Regent has received the troops; and I am informed that some volunteers have presented themselves and have received His Highness' permission to accompany them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 97.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 17.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January 10, 1878.*

THE Prussian correspondent, in the "Times" of the 7th instant, writing from Berlin, says, that "notwithstanding the serious attitude assumed by the British Cabinet, German public opinion disbelieves the earnestness of the intentions entertained by Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues," &c. This view of the present state of public opinion in Germany is perfectly correct. The fact is, that our "conditional neutrality" has been misunderstood.

It is assumed that because England has been neutral during the war, England will continue to be neutral during the redistribution of power in Turkey.

The people of Germany, as your Lordship knows, do not share the sympathy of their Government for the success of Russia in the East, and they would welcome any check put upon Russian aggression by the neutral Powers as good news.

Seeing, however, that Russia has been allowed to have her own way in making war upon Turkey, public opinion concludes that neutrality is synonymous with inaction, and that Russia will be equally allowed to have her own way in making peace with Turkey.

Under these circumstances, I think it necessary to repeat over and over again, in conversation with those who ask me, that Her Majesty's Government, animated by the desire to avoid a general European conflagration, have adopted, while the war lasts, a policy of conditional neutrality, which they will carry out impartially so long as Turkish interests alone are involved; but should at any moment British interests be imperilled by the operations of war or the pretensions of the victor, then Her Majesty's Government would be equally bound and determined to protect, defend, and secure those interests by all the means in their power.

The announcement that, thanks to the successful mediation of Her Majesty's Government, an armistice is about to be negotiated between the belligerents, has given universal satisfaction, and I note that it is the opinion of all those who know Russia well that her progress in Turkey can now only be checked by the firmness of England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 98.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 12.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 11 Janvier, 1878.*

APRES la notification au Grand Duc Nicolas de notre acceptation de l'armistice, les batteries Russes ont tiré environ cinquante coups de canon sur Roustchouk. Quelques boulets sont également tombés sur l'hôpital Anglais surmonté du Croissant Rouge. Les nôtres n'ont pas riposté.

No. 99.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 41.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 12, 1878, 4·30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Captain Fife, dated Adrianople, to-day:—

"Telegraphic communication still open with Tatar-Bazardjik, Yeni-Zaghra, and Yamboli. Weather probably delays Russians."

No. 100.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 11, 1878.*

I AM informed that about 250 men with arms left the Piræus in sailing vessels the day before yesterday for Thessaly. The Turkish Legation, I am told, had warned the Government of the intended departure of this band.

I am also told that arms are being sent clandestinely to Crete, and that bands of men are also leaving for that island.

No. 101.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 44.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 13, 1878, 11·30 A.M.*

CAPTAIN FIFE writes on 11th that there are only 5,000 troops in Adrianople, 2,000 of which are regulars, and more than 100 guns in position. Suleiman Pasha is, with 25,000 men, in Tatar Bazardjik, and wishes now to fall back, but will be, it is feared, cut off. Shakir Pasha has 35,000 men, but has to oppose Servians. This gives in all about 60,000 men in Roumelia. Consul Blunt is expected here to-night. Heavy snow has been falling, and the suffering and distress among the flying Mussulman population are terrible.

No. 102.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 45.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 13, 1878, 4 P.M.*

LAST night Russians were at Sarembey, one hour-and-a-half from Tatar-Bazardjik, which place has been burnt. The troops at Tatar-Bazardjik are retreating, but part are left at the station and are taking up a position to defend it. At 2 P.M. on 12th (yesterday) the Russians occupied Tchirpan, between Philippopolis and Adrianople, and it is probable that ere this they have cut the line at Hasskeui, a station on the line. If this is done the force at Tatar-Bazardjik and Philippopolis is cut off, and Adrianople being undefended, there are no troops left to prevent the Russians from taking possession of the lines of Gallipoli. The railway service is now conducted as far as Tirnova. All bridges have been destroyed between Yeni-Zagra and Tirnova Hermanli.

No. 103.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 22. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 6, 1878.*

I HAVE received information from an authentic source that the Imperial Government are making considerable military armaments, which do not prognosticate an early peace.

An order has been given for 100 torpedo launches, of steel, at the price of 40,000 roubles (4,000*l.*) each.

A contract for twenty-five of these torpedo launches has been made with Mr. Baird, of this city; and I am told that, in the critical state of the relations between England and Russia, he proposes purchasing the materials for their construction in France, Germany, or Belgium, instead of England, where it would cost him less.

A very large order for cannon has been undertaken by Messrs. Krupp, to be delivered within six months.

I am also informed (but I cannot guarantee the authenticity of the information), that two fresh corps d'armée are in course of formation here and at Moscow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 104.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 9.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 10, 1878.*

COUNT ANDRASSY, accompanied by Baron Orczy, left Vienna yesterday to join a shooting party in Hungary, at Count Caroly's, the Austrian Ambassador to Germany, who passed through Vienna some days ago on a short leave of absence from his post.

As Count Andrassy is not expected to return before Saturday, I made a short memorandum containing the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday on the subject of the armistice now being negotiated between the Porte and Russia, which I read to Baron Callice this morning, and left with him, at his request, in order that he might forward it to his Excellency.

I learnt from him that Count Zichy had reported that orders had been given to the Turkish Commanding Officers to send delegates to the Russian head-quarters, and also that the Porte was seriously alarmed, from the language of Prince Reuss, lest Rustchuk, and possibly other fortresses, might be asked for by Russia as conditions of the armistice.

I said that I presumed, from opinions expressed to me by Count Andrassy as to the expediency of the fortresses remaining eventually in the hands of the Porte, that his Excellency would not approve of the Russians obtaining possession of and probably destroying them; and Baron Callice answered that, as Count Zichy's telegram had arrived since his Excellency's departure, he was not aware what he might think on the subject.

The Turkish Embassy having been instructed to inform the Commanding Officer at Widdin that he was to suspend hostilities, and being unable to communicate with him by telegraph, have applied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their good offices in the matter, but they had already found it difficult to communicate with the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Widdin, and if he has availed himself of permission which has been given to him to leave, it may be still more difficult to convey a message to the Governor of the fortress.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 105.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 51.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 14, 1878, 2·30 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL BROPHY telegraphs following, dated Burgas, yesterday:—

"Town of Aidos burnt, by order of Turkish authorities, after being abandoned by inhabitants. Carnabat burnt in same manner. According to my information, Burgas will have the same fate. The population of this town implores protection. Please give instructions by telegraph."

No. 106.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 53.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 14, 1878, 6·30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from General Kemball, dated Baiburt, 12th instant:—

"The only soldier here is the Civil Governor; troops, officers and men, utterly demoralized. Shameful panic last night. Danger is that troops will pillage bazaar and leave. No arrangement made for provisioning them on line of retreat. I cannot discover that enemy's cavalry is advancing beyond Kopi; shall go to Erzinghian on enemy appearing here."

No. 107.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 36.)
Foreign Office, January 14, 1878.

My Lord,

IN VIEW of the reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government as to the negotiations for peace which are about to be opened between the Russian Government and the Porte, and in order to avoid any possible misconception, I have to instruct your Excellency to state to Prince Gortchakow that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, any Treaty concluded between the Government of Russia and the Porte affecting the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 must be an European Treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the Powers who were parties to those Treaties.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 108.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 54.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 15, 1878, 10 A.M.

VICE-CONSUL CALVERT telegraphs following from Philippopolis, dated yesterday:—

"Engagement took place at Bazardjik, and Turkish army is falling back on Philippopolis. Entrenchments have been thrown up, and batteries placed on the hills of this town, and in the plain. It is intended to make a stand here to cover retreat. Bazardjik is reported burnt. Three fires in Philippopolis to-day. Troops pillaged, but Mushir Safvet Pasha took strong measures, and succeeded in extinguishing fire and had eight plunderers shot. Many of inhabitants remain here for want of transport. This Vice-Consulate is crowded with women and children."

No. 109.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 14, 1878, 11 A.M.

MR. GREEN telegraphs, under date of yesterday, that Prince of Montenegro is said to be preparing attack against Dulcigno.

No. 110.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 15, 1878, 6·10 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER tells me very confidentially that Suleiman Pasha, after severe fighting, has succeeded in concentrating between 120 and 130 battalions at Philippopolis, and that he hopes to be able to reach Adrianople with them, unless the enemy succeeds in cutting off his communications, so that he cannot force his way. One brigade is already on its way to Adrianople, but it would take from ten to fifteen days to move whole force to that place, and the Minister of War is by no means certain that the operation can be effected, considering the large forces of Russians on flank and the demoralized condition of the troops. Should they, however, succeed in reaching Adrianople, he thinks that the place can be successfully defended. It is stated that Russians at foot of the Balkans have suffered very much, and are not in a condition to move soon or rapidly, but no great confidence can be placed in these reports.

No. 111.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 61.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 15, 1878, 6·50 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Mr. Longworth, dated Volo, to-day:—

"Armed Greeks crossing from Epirus into Zagora; 400 occupy the village of Brenziri. Greek force in Epirus about 4,000. Turkish force at Volo, 600; Larissa, 3,000. Turkish man-of-war leaves for eastern shores of Zagora."

No. 112.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 1. Political.)
Scutari, January 2, 1878.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 124, Political, of the 22nd November last, I have the honour to transmit herewith an extract from a letter I have received from M. Duby, in which he conveys to me a message from Prince Nicholas on the subject of the interview I had solicited from His Highness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 112.

M. Duby to Consul Kirby Green.

(Extract.)
Cettigné, December 25, 1877.

HIS Highness the Prince has been here for five days and returned to-day to camp. He begs me to tell you that he was sorry the requested interview could not be arranged, and that he hopes that you will not be either offended or discouraged. He will be glad, he says, to meet you when you want to see him if circumstances do not make it altogether impracticable. I see he has no more idea than I have of the proposed end of your visit.

I am likely to go on the 2nd instant to the country of Antivari for a few days.

No. 113.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 2. Political.)
Scutari, January 2, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that, by an arrangement come to between the Austrian, Montenegrin, and Turkish Governments, two Austrian vessels-of-war were allowed on the 30th ultimo to embark and convey to Budua all the Roman Catholic Albanians, numbering about 300, who had taken refuge in the Austrian Vice-Consulate in Antivari when the Montenegrins commenced to besiege that town.

I understand that an Italian man-of-war is cruising in Albanian waters for the protection of Italian interests in North Albania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 114.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 62.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 16, 1878, 11·30 A.M.

NEWS received this morning that after severe fighting yesterday Suleiman Pasha was compelled to abandon Philippopoli, which he set on fire. The Russians took possession of the town, and appear to have cut off Suleiman's retreat at Semendy and Haskioi.

No. 115.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, January 16, 1878.*

PRINCE MILAN made, yesterday, solemn entry into Nisch, taking regular possession of that place, and having been invited by deputation of Mahommedan, Jewish, and Christian inhabitants.

Battalions of Servian second class militia will relieve garrisons occupying towns, so as to enable the entire Servian force to act in occupying fresh Turkish territory.

No. 116.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 62.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 16, 1878.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1 of the 1st instant, and I have to request you to express to Mr. Blunt my thanks and approval for the care and labour which he has bestowed on his report of the circumstances attending the Russian invasion of Roumelia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 117.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 17.)

(No. 1. Political.)

My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, January 4, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that orders have been received here from the Porte to forthwith effect a further recruitment of the regular forces by an extraordinary conscription of one out of three of the Mussulman population liable to military service. The necessary instructions have already been issued to the various "cazas," or districts, and the drawing will take place as soon as possible. The number of recruits thus obtained in this vilayet will be probably about 3,000.

The usual annual drawing of conscripts was only effected about five weeks ago, instead of in the early summer, and produced about 800 men, according to the established number of one for every 180 of the male Mussulman population, which this year was about one in twelve of those liable to military service.

This extraordinary conscription will doubtless be effected without difficulty or disturbance; but at the same time the Mohammedans of this province are disgusted at these continual calls on them, and desertion from the Bosnian forces, whether Nizam, Redif, or Mustahfiz, has arrived at such a pitch that the authorities do not know how to grapple with it. Scarcely a day passes that I do not myself see bands of deserters, varying from 10 to 20, and even 30 in number, brought in in cords to this town, whence they are sent off under escort to their several battalions. Whatever it may be in other parts of the Empire, the war is certainly not popular in this country, and the sentiments of the Mussulmans, whenever they think they can safely express them, are universally in favour of peace on almost any terms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN

No. 118.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 64.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 17, 1878.*

I APPROVE the steps taken by your Excellency, as reported in your despatch No. 1530 of the 31st ultimo, with a view to put a stop to the continued execution

of Bulgarians, and to obtain the publication of the Sultan's Proclamation offering pardon.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 119.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 7, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from Consul Blunt inclosing a despatch from Vice-Consul Calvert. It gives me much satisfaction to find by Mr. Blunt's Report that Djemil Pasha, whose appointment to be Governor-General of the Province of Adrianople I recently brought to the notice of your Lordship in terms of condemnation, is acting honestly, firmly, and humanely. If he continues to discharge his duty in the same manner, I shall have much pleasure in bringing his conduct to the favourable notice of the the Porte, and in giving him such support as may be in my power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 119.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, January 5, 1878.*

THIS afternoon I had the honour to address a telegram to your Excellency as follows:—

"The Turkish troops at Islady have retired upon Prassadin-Derbend. Suleiman Pasha leaves this evening for Tatar-Bazardjik, to take command of Shakir Pasha's division. He and other divisional Commanders are placed under the direct orders of the Seraskier.

"The President of the Local Court-martial has also been recalled."

Lieutenant-General Safvet Pasha, who was for some time second in command at Adrianople under Djemil Pasha, has been appointed to the command of the troops occupying the different positions between Prassadin and Samakov.

I saw Suleiman Pasha shortly before his Excellency left for Tatar Bazardjik by special train. I was told by him that the troops lately in garrison at Sofia have not yet reached Samakov, and that although, when at Sofia, he had given orders that the large number of Turkish wounded in the town should, if possible, be removed to Samakov, he feared that, owing to the want of means of transport, they have had to be left behind.

His Excellency also told me that Servian patrols have reached Radimir, a small town half way between Kustendjil and Sofia, and that as the Russians and their allies advance they arm the Bulgarian population.

This, and the dread of a repetition of the cruelties perpetrated last summer in the Balkan and other districts, have caused quite a panic among the Turkish population, who are flying before the invaders, and seeking refuge at Tatar-Bazardjik and Philippopolis.

The movement is so general that the authorities are unable to prevent it. Should the Russians threaten those places the fugitives will doubtless continue their flight, and the far greater number of fugitives who will be thrown upon the place.

This state of affairs should not be lost sight of in connection with the present military situation. Whilst the great agglomeration of fugitive women and children will tax the resources of the place, it may also embarrass the authorities in providing for the defence of Adrianople.

I believe it is in a great measure owing to Djemil Pasha's representations that Suleiman Pasha has been relieved of the supreme command of the forces in Roumelia, a measure which, as far as I can learn, has given general satisfaction here; for Suleiman Pasha, as I have already had occasion to remark, is not popular.

Both in this matter and in that of the recall of the President of the Court-martial, Kadir Bey, Djemil Pasha has shown a force of character and a disregard of possible consequences to himself which are rare among Turkish officials, and reflect great credit on him.

I may add that within the last few days Kadir Bey sent Djemil Pasha a list of fifteen Bulgarians condemned to death for political offences, with a request that he would ratify the sentences.

This his Excellency peremptorily refused to do, and appended to the list a minute to the effect that "he disapproved of the sentences, and would officially give his reasons to the Grand Vizier."

I have just received a despatch from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert at Philippopolis, which I inclose herewith, reporting the advance of the Russians to Yeni-Khan, or Yeni-Mahallé, a village half-way between Sofia and Ichtiman, and the organization of the Civic Guard, as affecting the non-Mahomedan population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 119.

Acting Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopolis, January 3, 1878.

Sir,

ON my return here this evening I learned from a tolerably good source that a body of Russians reached Yeni-Khan yesterday or the day before. Yeni-Khan is a village on the road between Sofia and Ichtiman, and about 16 miles from the former place.

On arriving at Yeni-Khan it is stated they pulled down the telegraph wires.

It is not stated, however, whether the Russians have remained in possession of Yeni-Khan, or whether they retired after interrupting the telegraph.

It is also reported, but on dubious authority, that they have advanced upon and occupied Clissoura (Prassadin-Derbend), between Slatitza and Carlowa, and close to the mouth of the Trojan Pass, which is known to have been virtually undefended and unfortified.

The state of the roads and Balkan passes, however, makes the truth of this latter report improbable. The mountain routes are blocked with snow, which has again been falling heavily here since this morning, and continues falling steadily at this moment (midnight), and which would, it is natural to suppose, prevent any army from crossing the Balkans.

In spite of the severity of the weather, however, it is stated here that a general advance of the Russians has been ordered to take place through the Shipka Pass and those of Trojan, Etropol, and Orchanie.

I am positively informed that severe fighting took place yesterday at the Shipka Pass, in consequence of a Russian offensive moment.

From all this there appears to be reason to believe that the Russians have actually resolved, at all events, to attempt a fresh invasion of Roumelia at once, in defiance of the weather.

I shall proceed to Tatar-Bazardjik to-morrow morning, as I hear that no less than thirty battalions of troops have been concentrated there quite latterly. As, moreover, Rifat Pasha, the Military Vice-Commandant here, is also going to Tatar-Bazardjik to-morrow, I may, perhaps, learn from him whether the military situation is really so critical as it is reported.

It will doubtless interest you to hear that the enrolment of Christians and Jews in this town has already made good progress. Three battalions of 800 men each have actually been formed out of the non-Musulman population, and they are now being actively drilled. The majority of the new recruits, I am told, are Greeks, but there are also a considerable number of Bulgurians; and the Jews, Armenians, and Bulgarian Catholics have furnished contingents proportionate to their numbers.

Many young men of the leading Christian families have been enrolled.

It is optional for these recruits to become cavalry or foot soldiers; but if they choose the former they must provide their own horses.

At present this innovation appears to be regarded by the Christians in the light of a good joke; but I believe that it is the firm intention of the military authorities to give to their new auxiliaries their full share of the fighting if any should take place here.

Rifat Pasha, I find, has been daily attending their drill, and puts them in a good humour by occasional jests and pleasantries. To-day he complimented them on the regularity of their step, and compared it favourably with the movements of some Mussulman recruits who were drawn up on the same ground.

I have found here three battalions of infantry and some hundreds of Zeibeks, and three more battalions are expected shortly from Constantinople.

Suleiman Pasha, when at Pirdop the other day, expressed his opinion that the troops about to arrive here should be billeted in all the best houses of the Christian quarters of the town. As, however, several of the best Greek and Bulgarian houses are already serving as hospitals, Rifat Pasha, who superintends these details, has not carried out the Commander-in-chief's wishes on this point, but has distributed the soldiers among the public khans and the houses of the Roman Catholic Bulgarians, which alone have not hitherto had to furnish any hospital accommodation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 120.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 26. Secret.)

Constantinople, January 7, 1878.

My Lord,

SAID PASHA called upon me this morning with the following message from the Sultan:—"His Majesty wished to ask my personal opinion and advice, as a friend, as to whether it was probable that Her Majesty's Government would be able to obtain the armistice without delay, and whether, in the event of the Emperor of Russia refusing to treat for a suspension of arms through Her Majesty's Government, Turkey would be left to address herself to Russia, and to agree to the best conditions that she could obtain. Further, whether in the event of those conditions being such as he could not accept without practically giving up the greater part of his European territories, and consequently if he were under the absolute necessity of refusing them, England would abandon Turkey to her fate. Could he expect no help from England under any circumstances whatever? He was pressed by a powerful party, supported by foreign influence, to separate himself altogether from England, to come to a direct understanding with Russia, and to ally himself, for the future, with that country, and as the only means of saving his Empire. This course was repugnant to him. He looked, as he had often told me, to England as the best and truest friend of Turkey, and he was determined to do so as long as he possibly could. But the time was now fast approaching that he must decide whether or not it was his duty, for the sake of his country, to abandon this policy. The Russians were evidently making the most extraordinary exertions to occupy the whole of Roumelia, and to advance upon Adrianople before an armistice could be concluded. They apparently hoped to gain time by prolonging diplomatic negotiations with England, which they had no intention of bringing to a successful issue. The strain upon Turkey was too great. It was true that she still had the means of defence. With nearly 200 battalions in Roumelia she might yet offer an effective resistance to the Russians. But, owing to the incapacity and obstinacy of Suleiman Pasha, this force had been scattered in small bodies, which could be separately attacked and defeated, before they could be concentrated for the defence of Adrianople. The enemy had now occupied Sofia, and had already crossed the Balkans in the direction of Kyzanlik. He would have to bear an immense responsibility if he were to continue the war, relying upon the aid of England, and Russia were to end by dismembering his Empire. He therefore appealed to me as a friend for advice as to how he should act under such critical circumstances."

I begged Said Pasha to tell His Majesty that, with the most earnest desire to serve him, I felt that I could not take upon myself the responsibility of giving him even personal advice as to the course that he should pursue. I should not be acting the part of a true friend if I were to hold out hopes to him which might be disappointed, and induce him to persevere in a war which might end in disaster to himself and his country. Her Majesty's Government had defined their policy to be that of conditional neutrality, from which they would not depart except when certain specified interests of England were distinctly concerned, and I had no reason to believe that they had changed their opinion. They were now doing their best to help Turkey by endeavouring to open the way for peace, and, as His Majesty knew, they were in communication with the Russian Government with a view to an armistice. If they should fail in their endeavours to bring about an armistice which would afford an opportunity for negotiations for peace, I could not say what further steps they might think fit to take. The only advice that I could now give was that His Majesty should wait for the answer that Her Majesty's Government would receive from Russia, and which would probably be communicated to Musurus Pasha to-day. Should that answer be unfavourable, and there remained no further hope that the efforts of Her Majesty's Government in favour of peace would have a successful result, His Majesty would then have to decide upon the best means to pursue in the interests of his Empire.

Said Pasha said that he would convey my answer to the Sultan. He told me that the party who were in favour of a direct understanding with Russia were engaged in all manner of intrigues in the Palace, and outside, to induce His Majesty to give up all further communications with England, and to send some one at once to the Russian head-quarters to negotiate for an armistice, and subsequently to address himself directly to the Emperor of Russia for conditions of peace. His Excellency added that this party was strongly supported by the German and Austrian Embassies, and that His Majesty, not being able to understand the policy of England, was at a loss what to do. During the last few days things were going on very ill in Roumelie. Every one was now convinced of the incapacity of Suleiman Pasha, who was even charged with want of personal courage. The Sultan had withdrawn from him the chief command, and had ordered him to put himself, at once, at the head of the forces which were retreating before the Russians from Sofia and Kamarli. The supreme direction of military operations had, at the same time, been given to Raouf Pasha, the Minister of War. But this was not a satisfactory state of things, and the Sultan was desirous of recalling Suleiman Pasha altogether, and of naming Mehemet Ali Pasha in his place; but as the latter had twice received a command, and had been twice deprived of it, His Majesty hesitated in taking a step which would have the appearance of indecision and vacillation. Moreover, there were persons at the Palace who sought to make His Majesty believe that Suleiman Pasha was a dangerous and unscrupulous man, who might take his revenge upon His Majesty himself if offence were given him. Your Lordship will probably remember that Suleiman Pasha was employed to secure possession of the person of Abdul Aziz, when that Sultan was deprived of his throne.

I reminded Said Pasha that I had never concealed from him, nor the Sultan, my opinion of Suleiman Pasha, to whom I attributed most of the disasters that had befallen the Turkish armies in Turkey in Europe. It was truly deplorable, I said, that such a man should still be continued in command. His incapacity was generally known; he was unpopular with and mistrusted by those who served under him, officers and men; he had quarrelled with all the other Commanders; the Minister of War himself had spoken to me of him as a "canaille," and nothing but misfortune could be expected if he were continued in command.

Said Pasha replied that he had always shared my opinion of Suleiman Pasha, and he should repeat what I had said to the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 121.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 27.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 8, 1878.*

IN my telegram No. 7 of the 5th instant, I informed your Lordship that it was the intention of the Turkish Government to declare Batoum, Souda Bay, and a third port on the Albanian coast, free ports. The Albanian port in question is, I understand, Ain Serandja.

The Sultan has given his Imperial sanction to this measure, and it is intended, I believe, to publish His Majesty's Iradé very shortly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 122.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 29.)
My Lord. *Constantinople, January 8, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of two despatches I have received from Mr. Consul Blunt, reporting the panic prevailing at Tatar-Bazardjik on the advance of the Russians, the death of the brigand chief Petho, and an outrage committed by Circassians in the district of Kirk-Kilissa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 122.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Adrianople, January 5, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy, in Turkish, of a telegraphic despatch of yesterday's date, which Djemil Pasha, the Governor-General, received this afternoon from the Mutessarif of Philippopolis.

I regret that I obtained this document at too late an hour to enable me to accompany it with a translation of its contents.

Hilmi Pasha reports that the Turkish population of the villages in the plain, and town of Tatar Bazardjik, panic-stricken at the advance of the Russians, are preparing to abandon their houses and quit the country; and he requests Djemil Pasha to furnish him with instructions in the matter.

Djemil Pasha has, I believe, instructed Hilmi Pasha to allow of the removal of the inhabitants to Philippopolis, with the exception of the able-bodied men, whose services may be required by the army.

It is reported that Sofia has been occupied by the Russian forces. The Mutessarif, and all the members of the Civil Administration, have retired to Dubnitza.

Djemil Pasha, at my request, has telegraphed to Dubnitza to make inquiries after Lady Strangford and other British subjects, who are believed to be at Sofia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 122.

The Mutessarif of Philippopolis to Djemil Pasha.

(Traduction.)

LE Caïmacam de Bazardjik ayant appelé à la station télégraphique le Mouavin Bey, lui a fait savoir que les habitants de Bazardjik, à la suite de l'arrivée, pieds et têtes nus, d'une foule de réfugiés, du côté d'Ihtiman et d'Isladi, et à cause de l'appréhension que leur ville ne devienne le théâtre de la guerre, ont été saisis par la panique, au point qu'il n'y a pas moyen de rien faire ici, et que même les gens-d'armes ne s'occupent que de la mise en sûreté de leurs familles. Le susdit Caïmacam, voyant cette anxiété des habitants, et considérant que les affaires seraient arrêtées à cause de cela, a demandé la permission de transférer les femmes et les enfants à un lieu de sûreté. Là-dessus le Mouavin susdit répondit qu'il y a une armée Impériale à Kamarli, et qu'il y a beaucoup de troupes, soit à Isladi, soit à d'autres endroits, et que quant à la direction que pourrait prendre les opérations militaires, il n'y a que les commandants de l'armée qui peuvent le savoir, et s'il y a nécessité au transfert demandé ce sont eux qui donneraient la permission. Ainsi, si un tel n'existe pas, l'autorité militaire étant à même de donner toutes les garanties de sûreté voulues, on devrait s'adresser, ajouta le Mouavin, au commandant Pacha à cet égard. En attendant, comme on n'avait pas ici aucune information sur ce que le district de Bazardjik serait un centre d'opérations militaires, il demanda, de son côté, au Caïmacam quelle est la localité dont on dit qu'elle est devenue le centre d'opérations militaires. Là-dessus, le Caïmacam répliqua qu'il venait de m'informer que l'armée de Kamarli avait été transférée au village de Sirtch, mais qu'il n'était pas sûr de l'exactitude de cette nouvelle, et que malgré cela, la permission a été demandée au Commandant Suleiman Pacha, de la part des habitants, pour le transport des enfants, des invalides, et des femmes à un lieu de sûreté, et que son Excellence répondit qu'ils eussent à s'adresser au chef-lieu du vilayet. Le Caïmacam ajouta que les habitants, alléguant qu'ils courrent le danger de subir la misère et la ruine d'Ihtiman et d'Isladi, insistent à demander la permission de transporter leurs familles, et ils prétendent qu'eux-mêmes qu'ils resteraient jusqu'à la dernière extrémité. Le Caïmacam dit qu'à cause de cette affaire tout est arrêté, et que, si on accède aux vœux des habitants, on se soustrait de la responsabilité qui résulte de cet état de choses. Le Mouavin répliqua à ce second message que si on accédait la demande des habitants de Bazardjik, le mouvement se répandrait aux villages de Bazardjik, à Philippopoli, et aux chefs-lieux au point à ne pouvoir par l'arrêter, mettant ainsi l'approvisionnement des troupes en grand danger; que comme grâce à Dieu il n'y a pas pour le moment lieu à une si grande anxiété, qu'il tâche d'apaiser jusqu'à un certain point cette anxiété et qu'il leur ouvrit à votre [illegible] le contenu de cette correspondance télégraphique en faisant part au Caïmacam de la réponse qu'il recevrait.

Je prie par conséquent votre Excellence de vouloir bien, au plutôt possible, me donner des instructions par rapport au point que j'ai l'honneur de lui soumettre.

(Signé) HILMI.

Le 22 Décembre (v.s.), 1877.

Inclosure 3 in No. 122.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, January 6, 1878.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the notorious brigand chief Petko and one of his confederates have at last been disposed of by the Ottoman police.

Redjeb Chaoush, with a picked body of men, tracked these two robbers to a sheepfold near the village of Kemerli, in the district of Enos. As they would not surrender, and made a desperate resistance, they were shot, and their heads cut off and taken to Enos for identification. This took place on the 21st ultimo.

I regret, however, having to report that four days ago a body of six Circassian marauders, mounted and armed with Winchester rifles, attacked a large sheepfold in a wood situated in the district of Kirkkilisia, and after shooting one shepherd and wounding four others, carried off most of the sheep and a large number of horses. Djemil Pasha is taking the most energetic measures against the authors of this outrage. He has sent in pursuit a picked body of mounted police, with strict orders to capture these men and to shoot them should they offer the least resistance.

He told me that he was determined to punish these Circassian marauders with the utmost severity, and has given the same assurance to the Greek Archbishop of Adrianople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 123.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 8, 1878.

I RECEIVED this morning your Lordship's telegram, informing me that a telegraphic despatch from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had been communicated to your Lordship by Musurus Pasha, stating that the Porte was under the impression that the office of mediator between Turkey and Russia had been accepted by Her Majesty's Government, and suggesting that Her Majesty's Government should settle with Russia the principal bases of an armistice, which the Porte had in principle accepted. Your Lordship further informed me that you had answered the Turkish Ambassador that this was impossible, as you felt sure that the Russian Government would not reply favourably to such a proposal, and that you had pointed out to Musurus Pasha that it was not the fact, as alleged by the Porte, that England had accepted the position of a mediator; she had simply offered to inquire whether the Emperor of Russia would entertain overtures of peace. Your Lordship had reminded the Turkish Ambassador, as you had done on previous occasions, that at the outset Her Majesty's Government had declared their intention of maintaining neutrality between the belligerents, except on certain conditions which Her Majesty's Government had defined as involving British interests.

There is no doubt that the Sultan and his Ministers have been under the impression, as I have already stated to your Lordship, that the appeal made by them to Her Majesty's Government for their mediation had been accepted, and that the communications which had passed between your Lordship and Prince Gortchakow, and which had led to the suggestion of an armistice on the part of the Russian Government, were the first steps towards mediation. They also understood that Her Majesty's Government were disposed to ascertain from Russia, for transmission to the Porte, the conditions upon which she would consent to an armistice. I have taken care to point out to the Grand Vizier and Server Pasha on more than one occasion that Her Majesty's Government had not undertaken to mediate, but that, on the contrary, they had reason to believe that Russia would not be willing to accept the mediation of England; and I have clearly explained to them that all that your Lordship had done was to endeavour to ascertain, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, whether the Emperor of Russia would entertain overtures

for peace. At the same time I did not think it advisable in the interests of England, nor was I authorized, to tell them that nothing was to be expected from the step taken by Her Majesty's Government. I expressed my personal opinion that it might afford an opening for negotiations for peace, which might have a favourable result. I have, therefore, endeavoured to dissuade the Porte from taking a hasty resolution to abandon altogether its appeal to England, and from addressing itself in a moment of despair to Russia, in order to come to a direct understanding with her without reference to the other Powers. In answer to the constant applications to me for advice, I have counselled patience until the definite result of your Lordship's communications with the Russian Government could be known. But I need scarcely say that I have never held out any hopes that in the event of Russia overrunning Roumelia, and demanding ruinous and fatal conditions from Turkey either for an armistice or a peace, England would come to her help, or depart in any way from the position of neutrality which she has assumed.

But I venture to think that if we are willing that the Sultan should arrive at a direct agreement with the Emperor of Russia, making the best terms he can with him, and if we are indifferent as to what those terms may be, we should lose no time in telling the Porte so. There is no doubt that, whatever your Lordship or I may say to the contrary, there is still a lingering hope on the part of the Turks that England will come to her assistance before she is crushed by her powerful and inexorable foe. If that delusion were entirely removed they would then, in all probability, be compelled to submit ultimately to any conditions which Russia might impose upon them. At an interview I had last night at the Embassy with the Grand Vizier and Server Pasha, the former spoke with great vehemence and bitterness of the position in which Turkey had been placed, as he alleged, by the desertion of England. Whilst he was holding forth in a passion of grief and indignation, a telegram was brought to him from the Governor of Philippopoli, stating that the Mussulman population, panic-struck at the approach of the Russians, wished to leave the town, and besought the Governor to afford them the means of doing so. "Such," exclaimed his Highness, "is the justice and humanity of England. She has abandoned her old and faithful ally, and leaves her to be crushed by her and our implacable enemy, because, forsooth, a few Bulgarians were killed. Yet she now sees with indifference the slaughter of tens of thousands of human beings merely because they are Mussulmans. More than a million of honest and inoffensive Mahommedans have been driven from their homes, and are wandering in the open country in the present terrible weather, dying of cold and starvation, whilst Russians, Bulgarians, Servians, and Montenegrins are murdering, burning, and devastating our territories; and England has neither a word of sympathy for us nor is she willing to help us. Such being the case, why should we listen any more to her? Let us accept the best terms we can get from Russia, and endeavour to make a friend of her." It is useless to reason with his Highness when he gets into these fits of temper; and one cannot but pity him, as he is an honest and humane man, worn by cares and anxiety, and truly and deeply affected by the sufferings of his fellow-countrymen.

His Highness hurried off with his telegram to the palace, and I was left alone with Server Pasha, who has more control over his feelings and his temper. His Excellency said that the delay in receiving a positive answer from England as to the result of the overtures made by your Lordship at St. Petersburgh was causing the most serious alarm, and might lead to very grave consequences. The Russians were evidently making the greatest efforts to overrun as much of Roumelia as possible, and even to advance upon Adrianople before a suspension of hostilities could be agreed to. It was even suspected that Prince Gortchakow had entered into communications with your Lordship merely to gain time, and in order to deceive the British Government. Such being the case, the Sultan and the Grand Vizier could scarcely resist much longer the pressure that was brought upon them to make a separate peace with Russia, and to abandon altogether the alliance and friendship of England. They would have to yield if even within a few hours they did not hear that through the good offices of Her Majesty's Government there was a prospect of an immediate armistice. For himself, his Excellency said, he would rather resign than abandon the policy, which he had hitherto pursued, of acting in all things cordially and unreservedly with England.

My position here, as I feel sure your Lordship will admit, is a most difficult, anxious, and responsible one. I cannot hold out any encouragement to the Sultan or his Ministers to persist in an unequal struggle, which, if they receive no help from without, may end in the destruction of the Empire. On the other hand, to advise them to sacrifice all other considerations, including their ancient alliance and friendship with England, to the safety and preservation of the Empire, and to throw themselves entirely into the arms of Russia, would be to incur a far greater responsibility than I am willing to bear. The alternative may really come to this: is England prepared to support Turkey, or to abandon her

influence and interests in the East, and to allow those of Russia to be substituted for them?

I have endeavoured to obtain the most accurate and trustworthy information that is accesible to me as to the prospects of a successful Russian advance upon Adrianople, and even further. The Sultan, the Minister of War, Mehemet Ali Pasha, and other high authorities and persons competent to form an opinion from local knowledge, appear to believe that, unless an armistice be speedily concluded, no prolonged and effective resistance can be offered by the Turkish forces to the progress of the Russians in Roumelia. Mehemet Ali Pasha, with whom I had a very long conversation on the subject to-day, remarked that unless an armistice were at once obtained the game was up ("la partie est perdue"). He described the troops as greatly demoralized, from being constantly compelled to retreat. Most of the new battalions in Roumelia were composed of raw, undisciplined recruits (Mustafiz), who could not stand before the enemy, but fled in disorder. There was a complete want of officers. The forces were so much dispersed that they could not, he feared, be concentrated in time to check a Russian advance from Sofia upon Adrianople. If only twenty days' suspension of hostilities could be obtained he would not despair, he said, with the aid of the good battalions now being brought from Bulgaria and those already in Roumelia, to form an army able to carry on the campaign with a very fair prospect of success.

If, therefore, the Sultan hesitates to come to a separate understanding with the Emperor of Russia as to the conditions of an armistice and terms of peace, the Russians may within a short space of time obtain possession of Adrianople, and there will then be nothing to prevent their marching upon the Dardanelles and Constantinople. If they are once in possession of the Straits and the capital, can England rely on Germany and Austria, or upon her own resources, to turn them out again? Or if the Russians are ultimately under the necessity of abandoning their conquests, would they do so without exacting conditions which would be fatal to our interests in the East?

Under the circumstances that I have thus ventured to place frankly and unreservedly before your Lordship, I trust that your Lordship will permit me to say that it appears to me of the greatest importance that I should be furnished with full instructions as to the course that Her Majesty's Government would wish me to pursue. To tell the Turks that we would interfere should Russia threaten Constantinople or the Dardanelles may be to encourage them to carry on the war. To tell them that in no case will we interfere, may be to drive them into accepting terms from Russia which might prove fatal to our interests.

I telegraphed to your Lordship the substance of this despatch this morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S. *January 9.*—Since writing this despatch I have received your Lordship's telegram instructing me to advise the Porte to direct the Turkish Commanders to put themselves into communication with the Russian head-quarters in Europe and Asia in order to settle the terms of an armistice. I understand that the Porte had already received a telegram to the same effect from Musurus Pasha, with great disappointment, and some bitterness of feeling. It looks upon itself as now altogether deserted by England, and left face to face alone with Russia. It believes that it has lost much valuable time by referring to Her Majesty's Government, and that if it had addressed itself at once to Russia, the rapid advance she has made during the last few days in Roumelia, which will give her great advantages should the efforts to obtain an armistice fail, and the war be renewed, might have been avoided. I hear this from a good source, but I have not yet seen any of the Ministers since I have communicated your Lordship's telegram to the Porte.

A. H. L.

No. 124.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 31.)
Constantinople, January 9, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a summary, which Mr. Jocelyn has been good enough to prepare for me, of the debates that have taken place during the last few days in the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on the answer to the Sultan's speech, and of the interpellations which have been addressed to the Ministers. Your Lordship will, I am inclined to think, read it with interest. It confirms the opinion that I have ventured to express of the independence of the Turkish Parliament, and of the important part that it might play in the reform of the administration, the improvement of the condition of all classes of the Sultan's subjects, and in the regeneration of this Empire, were it only allowed a fair chance. When it was first called together, it was denounced as a farce and a sham by those who, it might have been supposed, would have encouraged any attempt, were it even destined to be a failure, to introduce into Turkey the germs of constitutional government, and would have held out a helping hand to men who were struggling for the great principles of civil and religious liberty.

Your Lordship will be surprised to find that the Turkish Chamber, instead of being composed, as it has been asserted, of servile tools of the Government, contains a majority of independent and outspoken men, who have boldly criticized and condemned the Ministers, and have summoned them to explain their conduct, and to answer to the country for the alleged mismanagement of the war, and for the disasters to which it has led.

In the first draft of the address, a paragraph was introduced, censuring in direct terms the Ministers themselves. On a motion that the terms of this censure should be modified the proposal was carried by a majority of one. An amendment was then moved in favour of a general expression of dissatisfaction at the manner in which the war had been carried on, and was adopted by 51 votes against 35. This led to the Grand Vizier and Mahmoud Damad Pasha tendering their resignations.

On Saturday, the 5th instant, the Ministers of War and Marine were summoned before the Chamber, and were submitted to a severe examination, and yesterday the whole of the Ministry had to present themselves at a second sitting of the House. In the meanwhile, the Grand Vizier had, at the request of the Sultan, withdrawn his resignation, and I understand that an arrangement has been come to with the Chamber, to withhold all direct censure of the Government in the address.

Amongst those who took part in the debates, your Lordship will find Mussulmans, Christians of various denominations, and a Jew. The boldest assailants of the Government were Emin Effendi, the Mahomedan Deputy for Smyrna, and Khalyl Ghanni Effendi, the Christian Deputy for Beyrout, recently Private Secretary to the Grand Vizier. If any fault is to be found with the proceedings of the Chamber, it may be that it somewhat exceeded its privileges, the Government contending that in an answer to the speech from the Throne it had no right to insert a censure upon the Ministers. There was some danger at one moment that a collision might have been brought about between it and the Government, which might have led to serious consequences. Had a man of the authority, influence, and firmness of Ahmed Vefyk Pasha been its President this would not have happened.

It is of the utmost importance that the Turkish Deputies, whilst keeping a vigilant control over the conduct of Ministers, and resolutely exposing and resisting all abuses and misgovernment, should be prudent and circumspect in their conduct and language. I have done my best to impress this upon those Deputies who have asked my advice. The experiment of a popular Assembly promises well, and if Russia does not succeed in putting an end to it, it would be a matter for deep regret if it were to fail through its own want of discretion, moderation, and judgment.

I have omitted to observe that reports of the proceedings of the Chamber were published in the local newspapers, both Turkish and European. I have the honour to inclose those inserted in the "Turquie," which is, to a certain extent, a Government organ. That publicity should have been given to discussions in which the conduct of the Ministers was unsparingly condemned is another important fact, which encourages the belief that the proceedings of the Turkish Parliament may not be without its effect upon the country and the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 124.

Summary of Debates in the Ottoman Parliament, from December 31, 1877, to January 5, 1877.

ON the 31st December Hassan Fehmi Effendi, who had been elected President, was duly installed in the Chamber; after which ceremony Naafy Effendi, Member for Aleppo, called the attention of the House to the capture by Russian cruizers of the Ottoman

steamer "Mersina," as the result of gross incapacity and of the faulty administration prevailing in the Naval Department.

The only apparent return for the heavy national debt incurred by the country was, he said, the fleet, by which it was hoped that the blockade of the Black Sea ports might at least have been maintained.

It now appeared, however, that a few Russian cruizers had inflicted more damage upon Turkey than her whole fleet had upon the enemy.

The speaker enlarged upon the importance of the capture, and concluded by proposing that the Minister of Marine should be called upon for an explanation, a motion unanimously approved by the Chamber.

After a discussion relating to the military and political situation, at the close of which it was determined to summon the Minister of War to explain the apparently uncalled-for interference of the central authority with the military Commanders in the field, the Reply to the Speech from the Throne came under consideration.

A lively debate took place upon the passage in the Address—"The Ministers have not acted rightly, and have neglected their duty with regard to the military and political situation."

The opinion of the Chamber was divided, this expression of direct censure being questioned by the deputy for Aleppo, who maintained that Ministers could not be impeached until they had had an opportunity of clearing themselves before the House, and finally the debate was adjourned.

On the following day a short sitting took place, when the Chamber divided upon the question of the clause above named, and 41 members appeared in favour of modifying it against 40, who wished to maintain it as it stood.

On the 2nd January the House went into Committee upon the vote taken on the preceding day, and after discussing several projects of amendments to the clause, the division resulted in favour of the opposition by 51 to 36 votes.

On the 3rd the details of the address were discussed, and one of the principal points raised referred to the admission of non-Mussulmans into the ranks of the regular army, a measure warmly supported by several speakers, who appealed to the original Hatt-Humayoun as not having been carried out. The Chamber, however, did not endorse this view, and a proposal as to the urgency of an immediate admission was defeated by a large majority, in favour of a further discussion of the question at some future time.

The Address contained a clause stating that the present abnormal state of the country had prevented the proposed reforms from being executed, and promising faithfully to proceed with them at the close of the war.

Khalil Ghazeen, Deputy for Beirout, and late Private Secretary to the Grand Vizier, delivered an admirable speech against the system of delay and procrastination obtaining in this country. He attributed to it all the misfortunes, past and present, which had befallen the Empire, and urged that the reforms should be immediately proceeded with, and not put off until the close of the war. The orator was much cheered, and evidently carried the Chamber along with him. The amendment having been adopted, the remaining clauses of the Address were accepted without further discussion.

Hadji Emni Effendi, deputy for Smyrna, then mounted the rostrum, and in a remarkable speech delivered a bitter Philippic against the maladministration of which the present Government had been guilty.

He accused them of delay in preparing for war, and of incapacity in conducting it. He declared the official number of the troops to be utterly and wilfully perverted, and inveighed in no measured language against the Ministers of War and Marine, whose bounden duty it was, he said, to appear forthwith before the House and to explain their conduct.

While the impression produced by the orator was still fresh in the Chamber, a message was delivered from the Grand Vizier requesting it to sanction a credit of some millions of piastres for military purposes. This immediately raised a lively discussion on the enormous expenditure brought about by the war, and, finally, Jusouf Pasha, Minister of Finance, was at some pains to allay the excitement, and to have the demand referred to a committee as a matter for urgent consideration.

The member for Salonica then expressed his alarm at the recent successes of the Servians, and at their rapid advance upon Kossova, threatening the Mitrovitza and Salonica railroad.

This reanimated the discussion on the military situation; and the indefatigable member for Aïdon spoke with his wonted ardour in favour of making the military commanders, between whom rivalry and discord existed, responsible for the reverses and disasters which they had caused.

The sitting of the 5th January opened with a desultory discussion respecting the imprisonment of certain money-changers for fraudulent sales of paper money, which, however, was soon cut short by the President in favour of the main question of the day—the interpellation of Nnafy Effendi with regard to the capture of the "Mersina."

The speaker repeated his former arguments, testifying to the activity displayed by Russian ships of war in the Black Sea at the commencement of the struggle, and in spite of the supposed blockade, which he declared had hardly existed.

He stated that the Commander of the "Mersina" was a Slavonian, and the second in authority a Russian, and that, therefore, there was every reason to suspect treason in allowing her to be captured. He called upon the Minister of Marine for an explanation.

Saïd Pasha replied that the ironclad fleet, not counting the Danube flotilla, consisted of twelve ships, a number so small as to render the effective protection of the Turkish seaboard impossible. The Russians had captured the "Mersina" with two fast steamers, of which they had several.

He then enumerated at some length the various expeditions executed by the fleet since the commencement of the war, and justified those to Soukhoum Kalé and to Batoum as outweighing in importance the necessity of maintaining a strict blockade. The troops, coals, and war material had all been conveyed by Imperial vessels, and the assistance of foreign ships had not once been required; and any damage which the enemy had been able to inflict by sea was to be attributed to the unavoidable weakness of the line of ships which were called upon to defend so extended a seaboard.

The Minister resumed his seat amidst the silence of the Chamber, and was reminded by the member for Aïdin that he had not yet replied to the questions put to him.

Saïd Pasha then admitted that his short tenure of office had kept him in ignorance of the nationality of the Commander of the "Mersina"; but the Minister of War here came to the rescue, and stated that, owing to the necessity of furnishing navy commanders to other vessels of war, the transports and ships of the "Mersina" class had been placed under the command of foreign captains. He, however, deprecated all idea of treason in the case, and said that, after all, the vessel was an old one, and no great loss; and as for the men captured, they should be considered as forming part of those lost to the country through the fortunes of war.

It had been impossible to render the blockade effective with six vessels; but Saïd Pasha maintained that the fleet had done its duty well, and had practically kept the supremacy of the Black Sea.

Several members then testified to the inefficiency of the naval arrangements, even of those undertaken for the retreat from Soukhoum Kalé; and as, upon various technical questions being addressed to Saïd Pasha with regard to the transport of troops and the wounded, his Excellency was unable to afford the information required, it was agreed to adopt a proposition made by the President to supply his Excellency with a written list of the queries, and to request him to reply to them on another occasion.

The subject then dropped.

The following account of what passed on the 8th in the Chamber has been supplied by the member for Beyrout:—

The sitting of to-day was tolerably quiet. All the Ministers, excepting Reouf Pasha, but including the Sheikh-ul-Islam, were present. This attention on their part was very flattering to the Deputies, who had already decided among themselves not to speak on this occasion of the past, and any member who made any allusion to it was forthwith called to order.

Server Pasha in a few words spoke of the political situation, and Mahmoud Pasha answered for the Minister of War. His explanations were not, however, considered satisfactory by the Chamber, which, nevertheless, appeared to some extent to comprehend the extreme gravity of the situation, and behaved with great forbearance, abstaining altogether from a division, and thus avoiding a vote hostile to Ministers.

Signs are not wanting of a more conciliatory disposition on the part of the deputies, which the Government appear to be doing their best to reciprocate.

Inclosure 2 in No. 124.

Extract from "La Turquie."

PARLEMENT.

Séance du 31 Décembre.

LUNDI la Chambre des Députés a tenu une réunion sous la présidence de Hassan Fehmi Effendi.

La séance n'était pas publique.

Hassan Fehmi Effendi, en prenant possession du fauteuil présidentiel, a remercié les Députés de l'avoir honoré de leur confiance, et a dit qu'il comptait sur leur concours pour **bien remplir la lourde charge de Président.**

Le procès-verbal de la séance précédente a été lu et approuvé.

Naafy Effendi, Député d'Alep, parle du paquebot "Messine," capturé par deux croiseurs Russes. Ce malheur, dit-il, est le fait d'une mauvaise direction des affaires. Une dette de 300,000,000*l.* pèse sur l'Empire. Le seul profit qui soit résulté de cette dette pour le pays est la flotte. **Aussitôt que les hostilités ont commencé nous avons déclaré officiellement en état de blocus les ports Russes, et tout le monde était porté à croire fermement que grâce à notre flotte nous avions été les maîtres de la Mer Noire. Malheureusement les quelques bateaux Russes nous causent plus de pertes que toute notre flotte n'en a fait subir à l'ennemi.**

Sur le bateau capturé, a ajouté Naafy Effendi, se trouvait la correspondance des corps **d'armée, et par ce fait l'ennemi a pu apprendre plus d'un secret d'Etat. Tout cela, a répété l'orateur, est arrivé à cause d'une mauvaise direction, car on n'a jamais eu la précaution de** convoyer les paquebots-poste de quelque cuirassé et on n'a point pris en considération la demande des habitants de Trébizonde sollicitant que quelques navires cuirassés croisent constamment dans ces parages.

Naafy Effendi, en terminant, a demandé que les coupables de cette négligence soient jugés et punis, et, à cet effet, il a proposé que le Ministre de la Marine soit appelé à la Chambre pour donner les explications voulues sur cet incident. La proposition de Naafy Effendi est acceptée à l'unanimité des voix.

Salih Effendi, Député de Castamouni, a exprimé le désir que des mesures promptes soient prises afin que de pareils faits ne soient plus renouvelés.

Yeni Cheherli-Zadé Ahmed Effendi, Député d'Aïdin, porte la question sur les bruits qui circulent au sujet des mauvaises dispositions du Ministère de la Police, à l'égard de la Chambre.

Les paroles de l'orateur provoquent un débat long et animé, et la Chambre charge la présidence de vérifier cette question.

Simeonaki Effendi, Député de Koniéh, monte à la tribune et prononce un long discours sur la situation politique et militaire du pays.

Naafy Effendi, Député d'Alep, résumant le discours de Simeonaki Effendi, fait remarquer qu'il porte sur deux points: 1, que l'ingérence de l'autorité centrale dans les affaires des commandements d'armée était cause de la situation inattendue du moment, le Ministère doit être invité à en rendre compte; 2, qu'étant question de démarches de négo**ciations de paix, le Ministère doit être invité à déposer à la Chambre les documents y** relatifs.

Il est vrai, a ajouté Naafy Effendi, que les bruits ayant trait à l'ingérence irrégulière de l'autorité centrale dans les affaires militaires et aux mesures incomplètes et défectueuses semblent être fondés. Par conséquent, il est nécessaire que les Ministres compétents soient interpellés. En ce qui est des négociations de paix, Naafy Effendi dit qu'en admettant même que la nouvelle soit basée, il pense que le moment n'est pas venu où la Chambre doit demander le dépôt de ces documents. Par conséquent, il propose que la seconde demande de Simeonaki Effendi ne soit pas mise en discussion.

Cet incident clos, lecture a été donnée du projet de réponse au discours du Trône.

A l'arrivée au passage où il est dit que "les Ministres n'ont pas agi convenablement et de la manière nécessaire en ce qui concerne la situation militaire et politique," une très-**vive discussion s'est élevée.**

***Yeni Cheherli Zadé Ahmed Effendi*, Député d'Aïdin, Mustafa Bey, Député de Salonique,** et Mustafa Bey, Député de Janina, ont soutenu le passage: d'autres, parmi lesquels Hrisi Effendi, Député de Smyrne, demandaient la modification du passage.

Naafy Effendi, Député d'Alep, admet que des erreurs ont été commises dans les **affaires militaires, mais il est d'avis que le règlement intérieur ne donne pas le droit à la Chambre de formuler une accusation contre le Ministère avant que ce dernier ne donne des** explications. Après la remise de la réponse au discours du Trône, nous avons toujours le **temps, a ajouta Naafy Effendi, d'accuser, dans la limite de la loi, les Ministres.**

Agnob Effendi, Député de Constantinople, Manouk Effendi, Député d'Alep, et Nalnch **Effendi, Député de Syrie, ainsi que la plupart des membres de la gauche, ont soutenu par de longs discours la proposition de Naafy Effendi, mais comme une grande partie de la** Chambre ne partageait pas l'opinion de Naafy Effendi, la discussion a été remise à la séance suivante.

Séance du 1 Janvier.

Le Président Hassan Fehmi Effendi s'étant rendu hier au Palais Impérial pour remercier le Sultan de sa nomination à la Présidence, et annoncer à Sa Majesté la constitution du Bureau, la Chambre n'a pu se réunir en séance qu'à 9 heures et demie à la Turque.

On a donné lecture d'un *tezkéré* Grand Véziriel annonçant à la Chambre que la **Sublime Porte a désigné Hamid Effendi, Bédros Effendi, Yanko Effendi Ekiadès, et Ekrem Bey, membres du Conseil d'Etat, pour représenter la Sublime Porte dans la discussion des** projets de loi qui seront présentés à la Chambre dans la session présente.

La Chambre a pris acte de cette communication et passe à l'ordre du jour qui porte la discussion sur le projet de réponse au discours du Trône.

Après de longs débats il a été décidé à la majorité des voix qu'on aura recours au vote secret en ce qui concerne le maintien ou la modification du passage dont il est question dans le compte-rendu de la séance du 31 Décembre.

Séance du 2 Janvier.

Présidence de HASSAN FEHMI EFFENDI.

Ainsi que nous l'avons dit dans notre compte-rendu d'hier, la séance de la veille s'est terminée par un vote relatif au maintien du passage de l'adresse qui concerne les Ministres. Le vote a eu lieu nominalement. L'opposition a eu une majorité d'une voix, 41 contre 40.

La séance d'hier a commencé par une explication fournie par Khalil Effendi Ghanem, Député de Beyrouth, un des 41 votants, sur une objection qu'il avait faite la veille concernant la portée du vote qu'il avait donné.

Khalil Effendi Ghanem voulait simplement que quelques modifications fussent **apportées à la rédaction de ce passage.**

La majorité de la Chambre, disposée déjà à faire cette concession, a décidé après **l'énonciation des noms des 41 votants, de se rendre dans les bureaux pour s'occuper des** changements qu'il y avait lieu d'apporter aux termes du passage précité.

Une heure après, la Chambre se réunissait de nouveau, plusieurs projets de rédaction avaient été faits et furent lus successivement. Deux ou trois de ces projets étaient plus ou moins modérés; les autres étaient beaucoup plus accentués. Après de longues discussions, auxquelles a pris part son Excellence Sadiq Pacha, qui dans cette circonstance-là a tenu un langage très conciliant, il fut procédé au vote de deux projets, l'un appartenant au parti modéré et l'autre à l'opposition: 36 députés ont voté pour le premier, et 51 pour **le second.**

Après ce vote la séance a été levée.

Séance du 3 Janvier.

La séance est ouverte à 9 heures et demie.

Sur les bancs des Ministres on remarque Djevdet Pacha, **Kémal Pacha, Namyk** Pacha, et Moustapha Effendi, Ministre des Affaires de l'Etat. Les tribunes du public et de la presse sont pleines.

Le procès-verbal de la séance précédente est lu et adopté.

Le Secrétaire Moustapha Bey commence la lecture des passages suivants de l'Adresse en réponse au discours du Trône.

Le passage relatif à la formation de la Garde Civique et à l'admission des non-Musulmans dans les rangs des autres classes de l'armée, afin d'arriver à la réalisation de l'égalité complète de tous les sujets, soulève une discussion assez vive.

Yénichéhérli-Zadé Ahmed Effendi, répliquant à un député qui a exprimé des doutes sur les moyens proposés pour atteindre l'égalité de toutes les classes, a insisté pour la nécessité de la généralisation du service militaire. Afin que les non-Musulmans, a-t-il dit, aient les mêmes droits, il est naturel qu'ils aient les mêmes devoirs et le moment est **propice pour qu'ils y soient conviés. Les sacrifices que les non-Musulmans se sont** imposés dans cette guerre ne consistent qu'en des fonds et des secours d'argent, et encore ces secours sont-ils insignifiants. Il en appelle au témoignage de Namyk Pacha, Président de la Commission des Secours, et dit que le Vilayet d'Aïdin, en fait de subsides en argent, **a contribué à peine pour 500,000 piastres.**

Nakach Effendi, Député de Syrie, supposant que Yénichéhérli Zadé a dit que tous les subsides donnés par les non-Musulmans s'élèvent à 500,000 piastres, veut répliquer **et rétablir la vérité, mais il renonce à la suite des explications données par le Député de** Smyrne.

Agheb Effendi, Député de Constantinople, prend la parole. Il commence par dire **que l'admission des non-Musulmans dans les rangs de l'armée a été décidée depuis le Hatti-**Houmayoun de 1856. Pour des raisons qu'il ne veut pas examiner, cette décision n'a pas été alors mise à exécution. Il regrette que la généralisation du service militaire n'ait pas reçu au moins un commencement d'exécution le lendemain du jour de la promulgation de la Charte. Passant ensuite à un autre ordre d'idées, Agheb Effendi cite divers articles de la loi sur le service militaire et propose que les Gardes Civiques Assakiri Milkié soient appelés Mustahfiz.

Plusieurs Députés demandent la parole pour répliquer à Agheb Effendi.

Le Président dit que les orateurs qui viennent de parler sortent du sujet. Il ne s'agit pas aujourd'hui de discuter le fond de la question, mais bien le passage de l'adresse faisant mention du service militaire. Il y a deux projets. Le premier indique l'urgence du dépôt des projets de loi ayant trait à cette question. Dans le second il n'est pas question d'urgence. Il s'agit maintenant de voter l'un des deux projets.

Hadji Moustapha Effendi de Kozan.—Il rappelle que l'année passée la Chambre a été unanime à parler des sacrifices de toutes sortes que la nation était prête à faire pour la défense de ses droits. Aujourd'hui il trouve étrange, lorsqu'il est question du service militaire, de voir des Députés discuter sur l'urgence ou l'ajournement. Certainement, a-t-il dit, qu'il y a urgence et je vote pour le passage indiquant cela.

Plusieurs Députés parlent pour et contre. Naufi Effendi, Député d'Alep, fait remarquer, que la généralisation du service militaire étant un des droits précieux accordés à la nation, la Chambre, représentant la nation, a le devoir de revendiquer, si c'est nécessaire, ce droit. Il propose le maintien du mot urgence dans l'adresse.

Les deux projets sont mis aux voix. Le premier indiquant l'urgence n'obtient pas la majorité. Le second est voté à une grande majorité. Ce passage dit à peu près que la Chambre et la nation reconnaissantes attendent les projets de loi y relatifs pour procéder à **la discussion de la question.**

Nakach Effendi, Député de Syrie, désirerait qu'il ne soit pas fait mention de la reconnaissance de la nation, attendu que les Députés ne peuvent pas connaître les vrais sentiments de la population à ce sujet.

Yeni-Chehirli-Zadé réplique. La Chambre représente la nation, et en cette qualité elle doit parler au nom de la nation. (Assentiment sur tous les bancs.)

La proposition de Nakach Effendi est rejetée.

Le Secrétaire lit le passage relatif aux réformes dont la mise à exécution a été entravée par les circonstances actuelles. On y procédera sans relâche aussitôt que la guerre cessera.

***Khalil Effendi Ghanem*, Député de Beyrouth, prend la parole. Il lit un discours** admirablement conçu. Il établit que toutes les interventions, toutes les ingérences des étrangers, la médiation de l'Europe, n'ont leur motif que dans les ajournements, dans les retards apportés à l'exécution des réformes toujours projetées et jamais réalisées. Il **voudrait que l'on n'attende pas la fin de la guerre pour commencer l'application des** réformes. Les soucis de la défense du pays ne doivent pas absorber toute l'attention du Gouvernement. Notre pays, a-t-il ajouté, souffre d'un mal que l'on peut appeler le mal des ajournements et des retards. Il faut l'en débarrasser. (Bravos et applaudissements **sur plusieurs bancs.)**

Un contre-projet rédigé dans ce sens est présenté et admis à la presque unanimité par la Chambre.

Les autres paragraphes de l'adresse sont acceptés sans objection.

La discussion du projet d'adresse est terminée et le Président, avec l'assentiment de la Chambre, ordonne sa mise au net.

Khalil Effendi Ghanem propose d'envoyer une députation à la famille de Ghazi Osman Pacha ou un télégramme à son Excellence, reconnaissant, au nom de la représentation **nationale, les services éminents que Ghazi Osman Pacha a rendus au pays.**

La proposition est bien accueillie par la Chambre, mais le Hodja Moustapha Effendi de Kozan pense que la conduite d'Osman Pacha ayant été entre sublime, la Chambre peut sans inconvénient ne pas faire cette démonstration. Néanmoins il a été décidé qu'un **télégramme sera adressé à l'héroïque défenseur de Plevna.**

***Hadji Emin Effendi*, Député de Smyrne, demande la parole pour soumettre à la** Chambre quelques observations, maintenant que le projet d'adresse est voté. Il monte à la tribune et lit avec chaleur un long discours qui est un vrai réquisitoire contre l'administration. **Il passe en revue les diverses phases de la situation avant et après la déclaration** de la guerre, indique en passant plusieurs fautes commises, dépeint la situation sous des couleurs sombres, et formule une interpellation au Ministère, laquelle contient plusieurs points et peut être résumée ainsi :—

1. Dans le budget voté l'année passée, la Chambre a accordé 15,000,000 de livres pour l'entretien de 600,000 soldats. Le discours du trône avait dit aussi que l'empire avait sous les armes 600,000 hommes. Comment se fait-il qu'au commencement de la guerre nous n'avions à opposer à l'ennemi que 170 bataillons sur le Danube et 140 **bataillons à Batoum et en Anatolie?**

Le chiffre de 600,000 hommes était-il illusoire?

2. Pourquoi le Gouvernement a-t-il attendu le dernier moment pour organiser la défense du pays, pendant que la Russie se préparait et que la guerre était inévitable?

3. Pourquoi avoir décidé l'expédition de Soukoum Kalé sans le consentement de la **Chambre?**

4. Pourquoi lorsque le Serdar Ekrem Abdul Kérim Pacha était généralissime des armées de Roumélie, avoir créé un commandement spécial et rival à Chipka? Pourquoi de Constantinople se mêlait-on aux affaires du commandement?

5. Pourquoi ne pas avoir envoyé à temps des renforts et des secours à Plevna et à Moukhtar Pacha.

6. Pourquoi l'intendance militaire n'a-t-elle pas à temps pensé aux approvisionnements des armées et a-t-elle attendu l'arrivée de l'hiver pour songer aux habillements des soldats?

7. Pourquoi ne pas avoir employé les navires cuirassés au service des transports, service qui se fait aujourd'hui encore si incomplétement par les bateaux à vapeur du Tersané, et cela lorsque on n'a pu faire un meilleur usage de la flotte?

8. Que faisait la flotte lorsque les Russes capturaient le paquebot "Mersine"?

9. Pourquoi ne pas juger et punir Sabri Pacha pour avoir, au commencement de la guerre, livré aux Russes la forteresse d'Ardahan avec 90 canons et tant de munitions? Il méritait une punition exemplaire et cette punition aurait été salutaire.

Hadji Emin Effendi a terminé l'énumération des griefs en proposant que les Ministres compétents soient invités à donner les explications voulues afin que les auteurs de cette situation soient découverts et punis. En descendant de la tribune il a déposé sur le bureau **le réquisitoire rédigé par le Général Ali Nizami Pacha contre le Généralissime et la réponse** du Serdar Ekrem Abd-ul Kérim.

La Chambre a décidé que ces documents seront imprimés et distribués à chacun des Députés. Il a été décidé aussi que l'interpellation de l'orateur sera examinée dans les sections.

Le Président fait donner lecture d'un message Grand-Véziriel. Ce message demande (1) un crédit extraordinaire de 31,000,000 de piastres pour les approvisionnements de l'armée est du Danube et pour la construction de quelques fours et moulins à l'usage de l'intendance militaire; et (2) un crédit de 20,000,000 de piastres demandé par le Ministère de l'Intérieur pour venir en aide aux réfugiés de la guerre.

Cette demande de crédit soulève une vive discussion. Yeni-Cheherli-Zadé s'étonne qu'on vienne demander quelques millions de piastres lorsque l'année passée la Chambre a accordé 15,000,000 de livres pour les dépenses extraordinaires. Il s'exprime d'une manière très sévère sur la comptabilité en général de l'administration et spécialement sur celle du Ministère de la Guerre.

Youssouf Pacha, Ministre des Finances, siégeant sur les bancs des Députés en sa qualité de Député de Constantinople, répond à Yeni-Cheherli Zadé en expliquant succinctement le système de comptabilité du Ministère de la Guerre.

Bassim Bey, Député d'Andrinople, soutient Youssouf Pacha en affirmant qu'il a pu constater de visu à Andrinople le fonctionnement très régulier de la comptabilité militaire.

La question des crédits extraordinaires demandés est renvoyée d'urgence aux sections.

Un second message Grand-Véziriel est lu. Il a trait à l'interpellation au Ministère de la Marine au sujet du paquebot "Mersine." Le message dit que le Ministère de la Marine délègue un fonctionnaire pour donner les explications voulues à la Chambre.

Mouvachit Bey de Salonique donne lecture de ce qu'il a lu dans le "Tasvirèt" sur les succès des Serbes dans le Vilayet de Kossova, exprime des craintes au sujet de Salonique, vu que l'ennemi, après avoir occupé Uskiub, Kouratchanli, Firid, Leskoltcha, &c., s'est répandu dans la plaine de Kossova et menace de prendre en sa possession le chemin de fer de Mitrovitza-Salonique. Qu'a-t-il été fait pour la défense? Le Ministère devrait donner des explications pour tranquilliser l'opinion publique.

Les Députés du Vilayet de Kossova soutiennent énergiquement cette proposition en ajoutant que les nouvelles qu'ils ont de Kossova sont en effet très-alarmantes.

Cette discussion en soulève une autre, savoir la rivalité et le désaccord qui existent entre les Commandants des divers corps d'armée de Roumélie. C'est encore l'infatigable Yéni-Chéhérli Zadé qui soutient le débat. Il propose d'adresser à la Sublime Porte un avertissement (Ihtar) la rendant responsable de cet état de choses et l'invitant à y remédier en réconciliant entre eux les divers Commandants.

Moustapha Bey, Député de Janina, ne conçoit pas comment on pourrait les réconcilier. **Au contraire on devrait les punir.**

Yéni-Chéhérli Zadé approuve, et la Chambre avec lui, si il est décidé que l'on discutera d'urgence dans les sections l'avertissement à envoyer à la Sublime Porte.

Le Président lève la séance à 9 heures à la Turque.

Séance du 5 Janvier.

Présidence de Hassan Feyzi Effendi.

La séance est ouverte à 7 heures à la Turque.

Cadri Pacha, Président du Conseil d'Etat, et Yanco Effendi Ikiadès, occupent les bancs du Ministère. Plus tard arrivent le Ministre de la Guerre, Réouf Pacha, et le **Ministre de la Marine, Saïd Pacha.**

Les loges des Sénateurs et des Conseillers d'Etat, celles du Corps Diplomatique et de la presse, n'ont pas une place vacante.

Un des Secrétaires de la Chambre commence la lecture du procès-verbal de la séance de Jeudi. Ce procès-verbal est long; la lecture dure plus d'une demi-heure.

Khalil Effendi Ghanem, Député de Syrie, fait faire une rectification. Le sens de son discours de Jeudi n'a pas été bien rendu dans le résumé du procès-verbal. **Cette rectification faite, la lecture est reprise et terminée.**

Quelques Députés demandent de légers changements, et **Yéni-Chéhérli-Zadé fait** remarquer que l'absence du bureau de sténographie est regrettable, car la manière dont les fidèles tiennent les procès-verbaux est fort incomplète.

Le Président dit qu'il sera remédié à cet inconvénient à partir d'aujourd'hui.

***Yénicheherli-Zadé*.—Il le faut bien car il vaut mieux ne pas avoir du tout un procès-**verbal que de l'avoir aussi incomplet.

Aghob Effendi, Député de Constantinople, propose d'agrandir l'administration et le format du Takvimi Vikayé afin que les procès-verbaux puissent être publiés aussitôt après la clôture de la séance, que l'on ne soit pas obligé d'attendre, comme l'année dernière, plusieurs jours pour lire la version officielle des débats du Parlement.

Le Président dit que des mesures seront prises en conséquence et il ajoute que pour que le procès-verbal se publie le même jour, il est nécessaire que la Chambre se réunisse de bonne heure.

Le procès-verbal est accepté.

Davidchon Effendi, Député de Janina.—Il y a quelques jours six saraïs ont été arrêtés par la police sous l'accusation d'avoir fait des opérations de Bourse sur le caïmé. Ces saraïs ont été condamnés à six mois de prison et chacun d'eux à une amende de 50 livres **Turques. Ils ont interjeté appel de ce jugement, mais, contrairement à la loi, il ne leur a** pas été permis de fournir caution et de sortir de la prison. Ces procédés ne sont pas certes propres à améliorer notre crédit financier et la surveillance de la police dans les alentours de la Bourse est un tort plutôt nuisible. Il termine en proposant que la Chambre écrive à qui de droit afin que ces saraïs soient mis en liberté.

Tahir Effendi, Député Israélite de Rodosto, appuie Davidchon Effendi et indique la

nécessité qu'un terme soit mis à ces fluctuations du caïmé et à la situation qui est faite au pays par ce fait.

***Naafi Effendi*, Député d'Alep.—Si ces procédés de la police sont vrais, le Ministère de** la Police a dû y commettre pour sauvegarder les intérêts publics. S'il y a plainte, qu'on s'adresse d'abord à l'autorité supérieure compétente.

Davidchon Effendi.—Les saraïs font appel: dès lors leur maintien en prison est inconstitutionnel.

Mamouk Effendi, Député d'Alep.—Davidchon Effendi fait-il cette proposition de sa propre initiative ou bien à la suite d'une demande des prisonniers? Dans ce dernier cas, la question concerne la justice et le jugement doit être revisé. J'apprends que M. Zarifi aussi vend du caïmé sur place. Est-ce à la suite de quelques opérations avec le Maliéh? Je demande les explications au Ministre des Finances.

Youssouf Pacha, Député de Constantinople et Ministre des Finances.—Je n'ai pas bien saisi le but de la demande de Mamouk Effendi. Au fur et à mesure que la nécessité se présente le Ministère doit vendre sur place 300,000 livres de caïmé. A plusieurs reprises nous avons fait des emprunts à M. Zarifi. Nous l'avons payé en caïmé à condition qu'il ne vendra ce caïmé qu'après quelques mois. Plus tard il a été convenu qu'il ne vendra ce caïmé qu'après six mois. Les emprunts que nous espérions pouvoir contracter ne l'ont pas été. Nous avons besoin de livres en or pour les communes de l'Etat. Ce numéraire nous ne pouvons l'avoir qu'en vendant du caïmé. Je ne comprends pas pourquoi le Député d'Alep mêle ici le nom de M. Zarifi. Qu'il ne dissimule rien; qu'il dise toute sa pensée.

Mamouk Effendi réplique, mais le Président veut ajourner ce débat, l'ordre du jour **portant des questions plus importantes.**

Roupen Effendi, Député d'Andrinople.—Il parle en faveur des prisonniers et rappelle que l'année passée la Chambre a pu par ses efforts délivrer un malheureux prisonnier qui remplissait depuis neuf ans dans la prison sans aucun jugement. Quant aux opérations sur le caïmé, il est impossible de les empêcher. Les négociants de la province, où il ne reste plus de livres Turques (et l'on peut dire la même chose pour Constantinople) ne pourront pas continuer leurs transactions avec l'Europe s'ils ne vendent pas leur caïmé. C'est nuisible que d'empêcher les ventes et achats du caïmé. Roupen Effendi termine en appuyant la proposition de Davidchon Effendi.

Aghob Effendi, Député de Constantinople, est du même avis. Il trouve que les procédés du Ministère de la Police sont plutôt nuisibles qu'utiles. Une fois on a fait la même expérience en Europe, mais elle n'a point réussi. Les individus qui ont été arrêtés ne sont pas des courtiers de bourse, comme il a été dit, mais des gens estimables.

Yéni-Chéhérli Zadé Ahmed Effendi.—Il y a une autorité supérieure chargée de surveiller les actes des diverses branches de l'administration. Il est possible qu'il y ait eu abus de pouvoir. Qu'on se plaigne et l'on avisera. Nous ne pouvons pas sur des on-dits **rendre le Gouvernement responsable.**

Roussin Bey, Député d'Andrinople, parle dans le même sens.

Le Président met aux voix la proposition de Davidchon Effendi. Elle est rejetée à une grande majorité.

Ohannès Effendi Hadjaverdi, Député de Constantinople.—L'émission du caïmé a été faite en vertu d'une loi. Cette loi assignait l'impôt tanzimat de Constantinople, les dîmes de quelques districts du Vilayet d'Aïdin et la taxe des moutons des vilayets de Konieh et d'Angora pour le retrait annuel de 500,000 livres caïmé. Qu'a-t-il été fait? Pourquoi cette loi n'a-t-elle pas été exécutée?

Youssouf Pacha, Ministre des Finances.—La loi n'a pu être exécutée. Les nécessités pressantes et toujours croissantes du trésor, le non réussite des emprunts projetés, ont nécessité l'émission en plus de 6,000,000 de livres de caïmé. Dans cette circonstance il était peu logique de brûler du caïmé lorsque nous devions en émettre d'autre. En faisant comme nous avons fait, nous avons au moins économisé des frais d'impression et d'achat de papier. (Hilarité.)

Hadjaverdi Effendi.—N'importe, la loi aurait dû être exécutée, lettre par lettre.

***Aghob Effendi*, exprime la même opinion.**

Le Président coupe court à ce débat en rappelle que l'ordre du jour porte la discussion sur les interpellations adressées aux Ministres de la Marine et de la Guerre. Par ordre de date, on commencera par l'interpellation adressée au Ministre de la Marine. Il donne la parole à Nazif Effendi, auteur de l'interpellation.

Nazif Effendi.—Dès le commencement de la guerre, le Gouvernement a déclaré la Mer Noire en état de blocus. Notre flotte était à juste titre considérée comme suffisante **pour ce service. Plus encore, on s'attendait à ce qu'elle infligé de grands dommages à** l'ennemi. Notre correction a été démentie. Les navires Russes ont parcouru dans toutes les directions la Mer Noire. Nos dames sur le non maintien du blocus ont été dissipées

par l'apparition des croiseurs Russes à Kilia, l'entrée du Bosphore, et par la capture de quelques bâtiments à voile. Les coups de canon tirés à Kilia ont jeté l'alarme à Constantinople. Les Russes n'ont dans la Mer Noire que quelques bateaux transports. Et cependant, ces pauvres bateaux ont démontré, malgré toute espérance, l'impuissance de notre flotte. Il est heureux pour notre Gouvernement qu'avoir déclaré le blocus s'il n'était pas capable de la maintenir. Après l'incident de Kilia, les habitants de Trébizonde sauvieux de cet état de choses ont adressé une requête au Ministère de la Marine sollicitant la défense des côtes. Le Ministère n'a prêté aucune attention à cette requête.

La déclaration du blocus sous-entendait des profits pour nous et des dommages pour l'ennemi. Puisque cela était impossible, au lieu de persister dans le maintien du blocus, n'était-il pas préférable de songer à la défense de notre côte? C'est pour n'avoir pas fait cela que nous avons perdu le paquebot "Mersine."

Le Slavisme est la principale cause de la guerre actuelle. J'apprends de source certaine que le premier capitaine du bateau capturé était un Slave et le second un Russe! Est-il nécessaire de dire qu'il était du devoir du Ministère de la Marine de ne pas confier **nos bateaux à de pareils traîtres. Les dommages que les Russes nous ont causés, la** capture de ce bateau chargé de soldats, n'ont pour cause que la mauvaise administration de **notre marine.**

Je demande au nom de la nation au Ministre de la Marine les causes du non maintien du blocus et de la capture du paquebot "Mersine."

Said Pacha, Ministre de la Marine, s'exprime à peu près dans ces termes. Il y a certains points du discours de Nazif Effendi (s'adressant au Député d'Alep—est-ce bien là votre nom?) auxquels je ne pourrais pas répondre en séance publique. Notre flotte cuirassée, excepté les "monitors" qui se trouvent dans le Danube, se compose de douze navires. C'est avec ces navires que nous devons défendre nos côtes, qui sont d'une si grande longueur, qui s'étendent de Batoum à la Mer Adriatique. Le Ministère fait bien des efforts, et il n'a rien à se reprocher dans la question de la capture du "Mersine." Les Russes ont quelques bateaux très-bons marcheurs. C'est de ces bateaux pirates qu'ils se servent pour forcer le blocus. On doit se rappeler que pendant la guerre de Crimée, bien que la Mer Noire fût au pouvoir de toutes les flottes des alliés, les Russes parvenaient encore à faire apparition dans nos ports. Pendant la guerre d'Amérique que n'a pas fait le corsaire "Alabama?" Peut-on se baser sur l'incident "Mersine" pour critiquer la marche **de l'Administration de la Marine?**

Nous avons des navires à Soulina, à Batoum, à Volo, en Crète, dans l'Adriatique. Aucune force ne pourra jamais suffire entièrement à une si grande longueur des côtes.

Cependant nous avons formé une escadre d'évolutions. L'expédition de Soukhoum-Kalé ayant surgi cette escadre n'a pu accomplir sa mission. Elle a dû se porter sur ces parages. Dans la suite les navires composant cette escadre ont dû prendre et transporter 50,000 émigrés avec tout leur bétail. Il n'était pas convenable d'abandonner ces infortunés. **C'est ainsi que notre marine, toujours prête à exécuter les ordres du Gouvernement, a** rendu de nombreux et grands services. Immédiatement après Soukhoum-Kalé, la présence de la flotille a été rendue nécessaire à Batoum. L'affaire était plus importante. **Aujourd'hui la nécessité de la présence de la flotte à Batoum a cessé.**

Quels services n'ont pas rendu nos bateaux transports? Combien de troupes, combien **de munitions n'ont-ils pas transportées. Malgré la nécessité pressante de réparation ces** bateaux étaient constamment en mouvement. Toute autre Puissance en pareilles circon**stances aurait affrété des bateaux étrangers. Nous ne l'avons pas fait. Nos bateaux ont** suffi à tous les mouvements immenses de troupes. Aucune autre nation n'aurait pu accomplir cette besogne. Si nous l'avons fait c'est parce que nos matelots et nos officiers de marine sont des Osmanlis. Soyez persuadés qu'aucun de nos bateaux n'est resté inoccupé.

Parmi les autres difficultés que nous avons surmontées il ne faut pas oublier le transport de houille. Nos bateaux ont chargé (ici le Ministre cherche dans ses papiers, mais il ne s'en sert pas, grâce à sa mémoire) à Eregli et transporté sur divers points de l'Empire 2,000,000 de quintaux de charbon, c'est-à-dire plus de 200,000 tonnes. Nous avons envoyé du charbon jusqu'à Aziziyeh, pour ne pas en acheter.

Inchallah! très probablement nous prendrons notre revanche sur l'ennemi. Les dommages qu'il nous a infligés, sont pour nous la nécessité d'équiper par-ci par-là notre flotte.

Saïd Pacha n'a pas été applaudi, mais évidemment il croyait avoir gagné son auditoire, lorsque Yéni-Cheherli-Zadé demande la parole.

Yéni-Cheherli-Zadé.—Nous remercions son Excellence pour les détails qu'il nous a donnés sur le charbon et sur les difficultés que le Ministère a eu à surmonter, mais le Pacha n'a pas répondu aux trois questions posées par Nazif Effendi.

Ces questions sont: 1. persistant une si grande faute nous n'avons pu infliger le moindre dommage aux Russes; 2. l'emploi des Slaves et des Russes dans le commandement de nos bateaux; 3. . . . .

Said Pacha, Ministre de la Marine.—J'ignore si le Commandant était Ottomane ou non. Depuis quatre mois et demi seulement dans le Ministère je n'ai pas eu le temps de m'en informer. . . .

Plusieurs voix.—Vous auriez dû vous en informer.

Said Pacha.—D'ailleurs ces bateaux ont une direction spéciale. Mais j'ai tout lieu de croire que les Russes ont reçu de Trébizonde l'avis du départ de ce bateau?

Redif Pacha, Ministre de la Guerre.—En ma qualité d'ancien Ministre de la Marine, je peux vous donner quelques renseignements. Les bateaux de la "Mahsoussé" étaient **commandés par des officiers de la marine. Obligés de compléter les cadres du la marine** de guerre, nous avons pris ces officiers et nous les avons remplacés par des capitaines étrangers. Le capitaine du "Mersine" a commandé pendant longtemps et sur la demande des commerçants de Salonique le "Vassitai-Tidjaret" desservant cette ligne. C'était un **bon capitaine. J'ai tout lieu de supposer qu'il a perdu son bateau à la suite de quelque** dérangement dans sa chaudière ou dans sa machine. La perte du bateau est certes **regrettable. Mais c'était un vieux bateau que Serkis Bey avait acheté pour donner au Sultan Aziz. Il ne valait pas grande chose et il ne faut pas attribuer tant d'importance à cette question.**

Plusieurs voix.—Et les soldats qui étaient à bord du bateau.

Redif Pacha.—Nous perdons bien du monde sur les champs des batailles. Maintenant que nous sommes engagés dans cette guerre, il nous faut du courage et de la constance.

Yéni-Cheherli-Zadé.—La troisième question était celle du blocus. Le Gouvernement l'avait déclaré.

Nazif Effendi a demandé comment les navires Russes ont franchi la ligne du blocus.

Said Pacha.—**Avec une escadre de six navires on ne pouvait pas maintenir d'une** manière efficace le blocus sur une si grande ligne. Lors de la question Crétoise nous avons employé toute notre flotte, et cependant nous ne pouvons empêcher les bateaux corsaires Grecs de forcer le blocus.

Yéni-Cheherli-Zadé.—Mais comment se fait-il que pendant le blocus, vingt-trois bateaux Russes chargés de blé ont pu franchir la ligne du blocus? Il est vrai que nous en avons arrêté quelques-uns dans le port. (Rires). Son Excellence le Pacha n'a pas répondu aux questions posées.

Said Pacha.—Ma réponse n'est pas peut-être suffisante pour cette Chambre. Mais elle l'est pour des gens du métier. Si nous n'avions pas eu cette flotte, les Russes, possédant une soixantaine de bateaux-transports dans la Mer Noire, seraient venus jusqu'à **l'entrée du Bosphore. Et puis, on nie les services de notre flotte!**

Nazif Effendi.—J'ai dit que la flotte n'a pas rendu des services en proportion de son importance. Son Excellence le Pacha a dit qu'il ne connaît pas le capitaine. Il devait le **connaître. La nation le paye suffisamment pour cela. Le Ministre de la Guerre nous a dit qu'il ne faut pas attribuer une grande importance à la perte de ce bateau. C'est** douloureux. Nous sommes devenus la risée du monde. Jusqu'à présent la nation n'avait pas le droit d'interroger. Elle l'aura désormais. Nous marchons à notre perte. Quoi! est-il possible qu'on ait employé de pareils commandants?

Hilmi Effendi, Député de Trébizonde.—Je connais, moi aussi, ce capitaine. Il est ancien au service. L'année passée il a fait échouer son bateau. (Ici Redif Pacha, **Ministre de la Guerre, ayant des affaires importantes à expédier, se retire. Il viendra** Lundi donner dans la section les explications qui lui ont été demandées.)

Rassim Bey, Député d'Andrinople.—Le Gouvernement Central a expédié des circulaires invitant les départements à renvoyer du service tous les Slaves. Cette circulaire n'a pas été reçue par le Ministre de la Marine.

Nazif Effendi.—L'expédition de Soukhoum-Kalé est un événement ancien. Depuis lors qu'a fait notre flotte! Nos navires transports où se trouvent-ils actuellement?

L'irrégularité du service est cause que 500 soldats d'Alep ont attendu plusieurs semaines à Alexandrette.

Ahmed Effendi, Evêque des Arnautes, Député de Constantinople.—Nous avons envoyé de notre service jusqu'à nos jardiniers Monténégrins, et le Ministre de la Marine a conservé des capitaines Slaves. Ahmed Effendi dépose une lettre ayant trait à la mauvaise manière dont s'est accomplie la retraite de Soukhoum-Kalé.

Le Secrétaire en commence la lecture, mais le Président la renvoie aux sections.

Rassim Bey.—Les explications données par le Ministre ne sont pas suffisantes. (Ap**probations sur plusieurs bancs.) Qu'il les complètent.**

Le Président propose, attendu que les demandes sont très-importantes, qu'elles soient remises par écrit au Ministre, qui y répondra au sixième jour.

Cette proposition n'est pas acceptée par la Chambre.

Emin Effendi Menekseli, Député d'Aïdin.—Depuis plusieurs jours le bateau "Sehamé" est en chargement devant Tophané ; le Ministre peut-il nous dire quelle est la nature de son chargement ?

Said Pacha.—Non.

Emin Effendi.—Ce bateau a-t-il une grue ?

Said Pacha.—(Après quelques moments d'hésitation.) Les uns en ont, les autres n'en ont pas. Ceux qui n'en ont pas requièrent leurs cargaisons au moyen de grues.

Emin Effendi, prenant acte de la réponse du Ministre, blâme l'irrégularité du service des transports, en disant que les bateaux munis de grues sont commis au transport des troupes, et ceux qui n'en sont pas pourvus sont employés pour le transport des canons, des munitions, et autres articles. De là les retards.

Mustapha Bey, de Janina.—Il demande que le Ministre donne une réponse claire aux questions qui lui ont été posées. Il demande encore s'il soit qu'à bord du bateau "Hatoemé" transportant 150 blessés, on vendait à ces malheureux un verre d'eau à un caïmé de dix piastres, et que trois ou quatre de ces blessés sont morts de soif à bord.

Nouri Effendi.—Il considère les réponses de Said Pacha comme insuffisantes ; il demande des explications nettes et claires, sans cela la Chambre doit mettre le Ministre en accusation.

Said Pacha.—Vu l'importance des questions, il demande qu'on les fasse par écrit afin qu'il réponde de même.

Cette proposition du Ministre de la Marine soulève une vive discussion. Naafi Effendi lit les Articles du règlement relatifs aux interpellations. Rassim Bey en lit d'autres, et, enfin, la Chambre décide qu'on remettra au Ministre par écrit les questions et qu'il y répondra en autre jour.

Ahmed Bey, Député du Danube, lit un discours ayant trait aux affaires de la marine. Il reproche l'emploi de la marine sur le Danube et l'avancement du capitaine du port de Varna qui, malade depuis six mois, n'est capable d'aucun service. Pourquoi n'est-il pas remplacé ?

Le Président dit que cette question aussi sera mentionnée dans la liste des griefs auxquels le Ministre aura à répondre.

Le Président fait donner lecture de trois documents qui seront transmis à la Sublime Porte.

Le premier demande, suivant une décision de la Chambre de l'année passée, pourquoi le Gouvernement n'a pas institué la Commission spéciale qui devait opérer tous les achats des articles nécessaires à l'armée.

Le deuxième a trait aux rations (Tayinat.) Il avait été décidé que les rations seront supprimées dans tous les départements, mais contrairement à cette décision on continue à les servir dans les départements de la Grande Maîtrise de l'Artillerie.

Le troisième se rapporte au Président de la Municipalité de Caïkeni. La Chambre avait demandé l'année passée la destitution de ce fonctionnaire pour avoir perçu des taxes illégales, mais il continue toujours à occuper son poste.

Après discussion, les trois documents sont votés.

Le Président lève la séance à 9 heures.

No. 125.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 32. Very Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 9, 1878.

IN consequence of the vote of censure passed by the Turkish Chamber of Deputies and the somewhat violent language used by some of its members, certain influential persons sought to prevail upon the Sultan either to dissolve or prorogue the Parliament. I had an opportunity of communicating with His Majesty on the subject, and most earnestly advised him to do neither the one nor the other. I represented to him that to take either step at such a moment as the present would produce the most unfavourable impression on Europe, and might even lead to serious consequences in Turkey and especially in Constantinople, where the public feeling was very much excited. I pointed out that the enemies of Turkey, who were numerous and powerful, would, if he did so, avail themselves of the opportunity to denounce him for a violation of the Constitution, and to proclaim to

the world that the Parliament had only been instituted to throw dust in the eyes of Europe, and without any real intention of introducing constitutional government into his Empire. I ventured to suggest that if, at the present time, public discussions upon the conduct of the war were considered dangerous, constitutional means might easily be found to enable the Ministers to give them explanations, and the Chamber to receive them, in secret.

His Majesty sent to tell me that the advice I had given was entirely in accordance with his own opinion, and that he had resolutely determined neither to dissolve nor prorogue the Parliament. His Majesty, I understand, firmly adhered to this resolution at a Council of Ministers held at the palace on Sunday night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 126.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 36.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 9, 1877.

MR. CONSUL READE writes from Shumla that the unfortunate Mussulman population, terrified by the cruelties committed last summer by the Russians and Bulgarians upon the Mahommedans, are deserting their villages and flying for refuge to the towns still in Turkish occupation. Mr. Reade declares that at Shumla, Pravadi, and Osman-Bazar, and in the surrounding country, there are upwards of 200,000 fugitives in the greatest distress, without proper food, clothing, or shelter, in this severe winter weather, with the snow everywhere deep on the ground. Your Lordship can easily imagine the terrible amount of suffering and the shocking loss of life that such a state of things entails.

The Turkish Government is convinced that the Bulgarians were encouraged by the Russians in their bloody proceedings last year, in order to terrify the Mussulman population and to drive it out of the provinces which are destined to form a new Bulgarian State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 127.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 9, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt reporting the passage of the Balkans by the Russians near Shipka.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, January* 7, 1878.

I HAD the honour to address to your Excellency to-day at 2 P.M. a telegram as follows :—

"It is officially reported from Philippopolis that the Russians entered the Tundja Valley yesterday through passes between the villages of Issova and Hamidli, in the plain of Kyzanlik, cutting off communications between Shipka and the town of Kyzanlik. The authorities and inhabitants of the town have fled, and as telegraphic communication between it and Adrianople is interrupted, it is evident that Kyzanlik has again been occupied by the Russians. The same day another column appeared on the heights on this side of the Trojan Pass, menacing Carlova. If it succeeds in occupying Carlova, it will completely isolate the Turkish position at Shipka."

The above important information was communicated to me to-day by Djemil Pasha, and I immediately telegraphed it to your Excellency, in the uncertainty whether it will

have reached you from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, who by the last accounts was on the point of leaving Philippopolis for Tatar Bazardjik.

Djemil Pasha will proceed to-morrow to Philippopolis, in order to make arrangements for the removal of the vast numbers of fugitives who are daily arriving at that place. Three trains were dispatched there this evening to bring them away, and others will be sent to-morrow. While many of the inhabitants of this town are daily leaving for Rodosto or Constantinople, others from the surrounding villages are taking refuge here, and this adds to the panic which has been occasioned by the above news. The authorities are themselves too much disheartened and depressed to calm the fears of the people.

Should the Russians force the Pass of Slivnia, there is nothing which can prevent them from interrupting railway communication between this town and Constantinople. At present they are evidently manœuvring with the intent to isolate the various divisions, and cut them off from their base of operations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 128.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 4. Political)
Scutari, January 7, 1878.

My Lord,

HAVING been informed that the few Roman Catholic families at Dulcigno, forming in all about sixty persons, had sent to Scutari to announce that their Mahommedan fellow-townsmen were threatening to illtreat them on the ground that there is no difference between them and the Montenegrins, and that the Bashi-Bazouks had already commenced to pillage the property of the Christian peasantry in the neighbourhood of Dulcigno, I called upon the Vali this morning to urge his Excellency to stop these proceedings.

Mustafa Pasha informed me that he had already heard of the conduct of a band of irregulars recruited near Pikini, and which band had this morning been stopped by his orders whilst attempting to effect its escape from the fleet. He had just succeeded in inducing it to return to its post near Dulcigno, and had, at the same time, sent secret orders to the Commandant of the regular troops there to surround the band and make it restore its plunder. Orders had also been sent to warn the Mahomedan Dulcignotes to behave properly towards the Roman Catholic inhabitants, who are as loyal subjects of the Sultan as themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 129.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 45. Confidential.)
Paris, January 17, 1878.

My Lord,

I HEARD yesterday, on what should be good authority, that the Roumanian Government and the Roumanian people feel very uneasy as to the ultimate effect of the war upon the future condition of their country; in fact, they fear that Russia will resume possession of that part of Bessarabia which was annexed to Moldavia in 1856.

It was stated to me in the most positive terms that under no circumstances would Roumania give up this territory with her own consent; that neither the Dobrudscha nor any acquisition whatever on the south side of the Danube would be regarded as any compensation; that, in fact, the Roumanians would rather not have possessions beyond the Danube; and that they were disposed to resist, even by material force, if there were a possibility of doing so, any attempt to deprive them of their present Bessarabian provinces.

It was represented to me that any such attempt on the part of Russia would be a breach of the Emperor's engagement at the beginning of the war to guarantee the integrity of the territory of Roumania, and would be a treacherous and ungrateful return for the sacrifices which Roumania had made for the Russian cause, and the military aid which she had, to the utmost of her power, afforded the Russian army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 130.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 46. Very Confidential.)
Paris, January 17, 1878.

My Lord,

I NEED hardly say that the statements respecting the resumption of the Moldavian portion of Bessarabia, which are recorded in my immediately preceding despatch, were made to me by M. Callimaki Catargi, the Agent at Paris of the Roumanian Government.

I have not inserted his name in that despatch, because he professed to be speaking without instructions from his Government, and to be anxious not to be mentioned. He spoke, however, in the strongest and most positive terms, and expressed a desire that Her Majesty's Government should be made fully aware of the deep feeling in Roumania on the subject of Bessarabia.

He evidently wished to elicit from Her Majesty's Government, through me, some indication of their views as to giving their support to Roumania in withstanding an attempt on the part of Russia to recover the Bessarabian territory which she lost in 1856.

I expressed no opinion of my own to him on the subject; nor did I in any way engage to obtain for him information with regard to the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government respecting it.

I may observe that he did not, on this occasion, express any impatience to be made acquainted with the decision of Her Majesty's Government on the question of beginning commercial negotiations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 131.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 68.)
(Telegraphic)
Constantinople, January 17, 1878.

MUSURUS PASHA has been directed to inform you that Russians are about to enter Adrianople, and that there is every reason to believe that they will then march upon Constantinople.

The Ministers and chief dignitaries are in Council with the Sultan, and are in a state of panic, which it is feared may extend to the city when danger is known. Considering the grave deception practised by Russian Government upon that of Her Majesty, should not some precautions be taken at once to prevent Russians occupying Dardanelles by surprise? All quiet here for the present.

No. 132.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 71.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, January 18, 1878.

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs last night:—

"Vali informe Consuls appelés chez lui que l'autorité n'a pas l'intention de défendre Andrinople, et qu'elle se retirera en laissant aux notables des communautés le soin de se constituer en Conseil Municipal, et de veiller à la sécurité publique avec l'assistance d'un petit nombre de troupes spécialement détachées à cet effet. Cette mesure étant peut-être insuffisante, prions demander à direction chemin de fer pour départ urgent de nos nationaux trains pour Constantinople qu'on ne peut obtenir ici sur notre prière. La Vali télégraphie à Sublime Porte pour que le Commandant militaire soit autorisé à mettre quelques soldats à la disposition de chaque Consulat, vu les rafûts commis aux environs par Circassiens et irréguliers, avons déjà adressé à l'autorité requête à l'effet d'éloigner avant départ de garnison les irréguliers qui sont déjà dans la ville.

"Veuillez répondre. Même dépêche adressée par nos collègues."

No. 133.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 73.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 18, 1878.*

MR. BLUNT proposes to leave Adrianople in a few days. I have instructed him, if that city is not defended, and there is no fear for his personal safety, to remain at his post. Measures are being taken to enable any foreigners wishing to do so to return to Constantinople.

No. 134.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 18, 1878.*

COMMANDER HAMOND, of Her Majesty's ship "Torch," reports from Bourgas that town is emptied of its inhabitants and will be burnt; departure of Turkish authorities; about 400 fugitives took refuge on board his vessel, and he, in consequence, and in the cause of humanity, chartered a tug to take 250 of them to Constantinople, retaining over 200 on board. He trusts Her Majesty's Government will approve the step he has taken, and will reimburse to him the expense of the tug, for which he has made himself responsible, and which will amount to about 240*l.* (?).

No. 135.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 75.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 18, 1878.*

SAFVET PASHA informs me that the Mussulman population is everywhere abandoning their homes on approach of the Russians; that a number of fugitives without food and shelter, both in Bulgaria and Roumelia, is now enormous; and the distress, suffering, and loss of life, terrible and heart-rending. The Russian Generals have issued no Proclamation promising protection to the lives, property, and honour of Mehommedans, and this has added to the panic. Porte is convinced that this is done purposely in order to drive out the whole Mussulman population from the two invaded provinces. Can nothing be done to prevent or check so much misery and devastation? Thousands of fugitives are still arriving here daily, and are exposed to great sufferings. I receive deplorable accounts from Bourgas-Dedeagatch and other places.

No. 136.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18,)

(No. 76.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 18, 1878.*

SULTAN has been assured that 90,000 men will be brought together shortly for the defence of Constantinople lines. His Majesty talks of going out to put himself at the head of them. 10,000 men are being brought from Varna, 10 battalions are coming from Batoum, 20 are said to be on their way from Yamboli, and others are already here, or can be collected. But a large part of the force for defence will be composed of Civic Guard, upon which little dependence can be placed. I cannot ascertain that any preparations are being made for the Sultan's departure as reported by Count Zichy. I have sent full plans and descriptions of Bulair lines to your Lordship.

No. 137.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, January 18, 1878.*

"DAILY NEWS'" correspondent informs me that he hears on good authority that it is the intention of General Gourko to make a dash upon Gallipoli.

No. 138.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 2. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 18, 1878.*

I HAVE to express to you my approval of the language employed by you in your conversation with M. Cogalniceano reported in your despatch No. 1, Very Confidential, of the 1st instant, relative to the position of Roumania in the present state of affairs and to the future prospects of the Principality.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 139.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 1. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 18, 1878.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 82, Political, of the 29th ultimo, reporting your proceedings on the arrival at Canea of the Turkish Commission of Inquiry; and I have to express to you my approval of your efforts to bring about an arrangement between the Porte and the Christians of Crete.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 140.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 2. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, January 5, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople contradicting a report which has appeared in the newspapers of the existence of agitation in Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, January 5, 1878.

Sir,

IN recent English newspapers I have remarked a paragraph which purports to have been telegraphed from Constantinople by way of Syria, to the effect that considerable agitation prevails in the Lebanon in consequence of the inhabitants having refused to send Deputies to the National Assembly and to furnish recruits for the army.

At any other time I should have allowed this statement to pass without notice, but under present circumstances I consider it my duty to assure your Excellency that no such agitation exists in the Lebanon, where the most perfect order and tranquillity reign.

The refusal to send Deputies to the National Assembly I have already had the honour to report in my despatch of the 9th November last.

The statement that the inhabitants of the Lebanon had refused to furnish recruits is simply untrue, they not having been invited to do so, being exempted from military service with the exception of furnishing men for the local militia or gendarmerie maintained as a police force for the preservation of order in the mountain, according to Article 14 of the "Réglement du Liban."

About last July his Excellency the Governor-General used strenuous efforts to raise a body of volunteers amongst the inhabitants of the Lebanon, but he did not succeed in inducing any of the mountaineers to leave their homes to incur the hardships and risks of war, and I hear that this want of success on the part of Rustem Pasha has been commented on by the native press at Constantinople as showing a want of devotion and patriotism on the part of the Lebanese and a lack of zeal on the part of the Governor-General which, as far as his Excellency is concerned, is certainly not the case.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 141.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 29. Secret.)

Berlin, January 14, 1878.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 22, Secret, of the 12th instant, I recounted some of Prince Bismarck's "table talk" to your Lordship, and to-day I have heard of other similar utterances of his, from an equally good authority, which I beg to add to the record of the former ones.

Prince Bismarck, in discussing Count Andrassy, concluded that that statesman had done well for Austria, for he had secured two strings to her bow:—

1. A secret Russian promise of additional provinces and respect of Austrian interests generally, in return for her neutrality, and—

2. An offer of English co-operation to protect Anglo-Austrian interests if Russia should turn traitor and not keep her promise at the eleventh hour.

He thought, however, that Prince Gortchakow would keep his promises to Austria and would respect English interests, because it was the obvious interest of Russia to avoid, after her brilliant successes, complications, and to secure as soon as possible through peaceful agreement the guarantee of the Great Powers for what she has already acquired through the war.

As far as German interests were concerned, he would not be sorry to see England go to war and vanquish Russia, because the moral supremacy, influence, and example of England would be better for Europe than the supremacy, influence, and example of Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 142.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Bucharest, January 19, 1878.

IT is believed that Pasha commanding at Rustchuk has been bought, and that the place may surrender any day.

No. 143.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 78.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1878

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs at 8 P.M. yesterday:—

"The Vali will leave Adrianople at 10 o'clock to-night by special train. He has done his utmost to maintain public tranquillity. Seventy-two picked soldiers have been left

here for protection of foreign Consulates. The town is quiet, and will probably be occupied by Russians to-morrow. I shall remain here."

No. 144.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 80.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1878.

THE whole of the Mahommedan population is flying before Russians, and some hundred thousand women and children are in the open fields dying of hunger and cold. Porte asks Her Majesty's Government, in the name of humanity, to induce Russians to give some assurance in the form of a Proclamation guaranteeing the Musulmans protection to their lives and honour. The Turkish Government and authorities have not power to check the panic, which may soon extend to Constantinople with most disastrous consequences. It seems but too probable that the Russians are seeking to exterminate or drive out the Mahommedan population.

No. 145.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 81.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1878.

VICE-CONSUL BROPHY and Captain Hamond, of "Torch," just arrived here and report as follows:—

"Towns of Slimnia, Aidos, and Karnabad burnt, Bourgas plundered, and great danger; 2,000 homeless and destitute Rayahs on beach there, without means of flight. Town of Sigopoli burning last night. Towns of Missevria and Achialo, with 20 towns and Christian refugees, threatened by Circassians, and without defence. All the country devastated. Massacres of Christians have already taken place on a large scale, and appear inevitable throughout the whole province, as the Rayahs have no means of sea transport, and there is no Turkish force to restrain Circassians, Albanian and Turkish Bashi-Bazouks. Her Majesty's ship "Torch," then at Bourgas, has sent and brought to Constantinople upwards of 1,200 destitute fugitives from that district.

No. 146.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 82.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1878.

CONSUL BLUNT reports that Russians and Bulgarians are massacring the inhabitants of Turkish villages, which adds to the terror of the Mahommedan population.

No. 147.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 84.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1878.

PORTE has received news that the Greeks are about to attack Turkey at once. Turkish Government earnestly request Her Majesty's Government to use their good offices to prevent this fresh aggression.

No. 148.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Athens, January 19, 1878.

AN officer of the Greek army is said to have started by land with about 300 volunteers to promote insurrection in Turkey. He is reported to be provided with about 2,000*l.* sterling.

Several Greek merchant-steamers are, I am told, ordered to hold themselves at the disposal of the Government.

The King is said to favour a warlike policy. All officers on furlough have received orders to join their respective corps.

No. 149.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

Rome, January 19, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)

THE King proceeded to Parliament in state to-day and took the oath to the Constitution; after which the Senators and Deputies took the oath of allegiance. His Majesty then addressed a speech to Parliament, which was enthusiastically received. The Queen was in a tribune. The reception of their Majesties was most cordial.

No. 150.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20, 2 P.M.)

(No. .)

Constantinople, January 20, 1878, 11:30 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received following two telegrams from Consul Blunt, dated yesterday:—

First, 4 P.M.—"Adrianople not yet occupied. Town quiet. Turkish population very steady. Christians arriving. Russians at Mustapha Pasha. Signs that they are taking southerly direction."

Second, 10 P.M.—"Town continues quiet. Fasso Effendi has been appointed Acting Governor. Is authorized to form police corps. It will be composed of 100 Christians, 50 Turks, 25 Armenians, and 25 Jews. He will disarm the population, and is doing his best to prevent pillaging and disturbances. No news received from town. Deputies sent yesterday afternoon to meet the Russians."

No. 151.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, January 20, 1878, 10:30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

MR. LAYARD telegraphs that the whole of the Mahommedan population is flying before the Russians, and some hundred thousand women and children are in the open fields dying of hunger and cold.

Porte asks Her Majesty's Government, in the name of humanity, to induce the Russians to give some assurance, in the form of a Proclamation, guaranteeing the Mussulmans protection to their lives and honour.

Make a suitable representation without delay to the Emperor, for the sake of the general population, Christian and Mahomedan, of the districts affected.

No. 152.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 48.)

Foreign Office, January 20, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE received a telegraphic despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that the entire Mussulman population is flying before the Russian forces, and that women and children, to the number of about 100,000, are dying of cold and starvation in the open fields.

The Turkish Government have requested Her Majesty's Government, in the name of humanity, to induce the Russians to give some assurance, in the form of a Proclamation, guaranteeing that protection will be afforded to the lives and honour of the Mussulman population.

I have therefore to instruct your Excellency to lose no time in making a suitable representation to the Emperor, for the sake of the inhabitants, both Christian and Mussulman, of the districts affected.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 153.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 54.)

St. Petersburgh, January 15, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship herewith copy of the reply of M. de Giers to my note of the 4th instant on the casualties caused in the hospital at Rustchuk in consequence of the fire of the Russian batteries directed at that building.

M. de Giers, as explanatory of the incident referred to, quotes a telegram from the Grand Duke Commander-in-chief, dated January 3, in which it is stated that a shot being fired from the Russian battery passed over the Turkish battalions and accidentally struck a house over which the Red Crescent flag was flying, and against which the artillery fire was never directed. Suddenly, however, several hundred soldiers armed* were perceived coming out of that house. Being thus convinced of the fact that the Turks placed their barracks under the protection of the Red Crescent, the Russian batteries of Giurgevo again directed, on the following day, their batteries against this house and against that of the Quarantine.

"The incident in question," observes M. de Giers, "is thus explained by the abuse by the Turks of the Convention of Geneva."

M. de Giers concludes by stating that he feels it his duty to add that the Imperial Commanders-in-chief have given the strictest orders to respect the Ottoman Sanitory flag, but that these orders can only be rigorously observed if the enemy does not abuse it for the purpose of concealing their military operations, and of placing their troops under shelter from danger.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 153.

M. de Giers to Lord A. Loftus.

St. Petersbourg, le [illegible] 1877.
[illegible] Décembre, 1877
[illegible] Janvier, 1878.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AI l'honneur de recevoir la note de votre Excellence en date du [illegible] 1878.

En réponse à cette communication je m'empresse d'attirer votre attention sur le télégramme officielle de Monseigneur le Grand Duc Nicolas en date du [illegible] 1878, qui a été publié par les journaux, et dont une partie se rapporte évidemment à l'incident du bombardement de Roustchouk signalé par votre Excellence. Ce télégramme porte textuellement, "sachant que l'ennemi devait bientôt remonter la chaussée . . . . . notre batterie No. 16 pointa d'avance ses canons sur cet endroit. Lorsque la colonne remonta sur la chaussée on lit feu d'un canon dont l'obus passa par dessus les bataillons Turcs et atteignit par hasard une maison sur laquelle flottait un drapeau du Croissant Rouge et contre laquelle on ne lançait ordinairement jamais de projectiles. Tout à coup on vit s'élancer de cette maison plusieurs centaines de soldats armés. S'étant ainsi convaincu du fait que les Turcs mettent leurs casernes sous la protection du drapeau du Croissant Rouge, nos batteries de Giurgevo dirigèrent de nouveau le lendemain leur feu sur cette maison et sur celle de la quarantaine."

L'incident en question s'explique ainsi par un abus du drapeau du Croissant Rouge que les Turcs se permettent au mépris de la Convention de Genève.

Je ne manquerai pas néanmoins de transmettre la note de votre Excellence à notre quartier-général en Bulgarie.

Le Ministère Impérial croit devoir ajouter que nos Commandants-en-chef ont donné les ordres les plus sévères pour faire respecter par nos troupes le drapeau sanitaire Ottoman, mais que ces règles ne sauraient être rigoureusement observées que si l'ennemi

* It must have been at a distance of two miles, and therefore difficult to distinguish whether the men were armed or not.

n'en aimse pas pour cacher ses opérations militaires et mettre ses troupes actives à l'abri du danger.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé)

No. 154.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 40. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January 19, 1878.*

I HAVE been informed upon good authority that the Russian Government have quite lately dispatched a special Agent to Messrs. Krupp at Essen with a large order for cannon.

This is the third or fourth time during the last six months that an Agent has been sent to Messrs. Krupp for the same purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 155.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 21.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 20 Janvier, 1878.*

LA cavalerie Russe est entrée aujourd'hui à Andrinople. Dans la crainte d'une répétition des massacres d'Eski-Zaïra, nos malheureuses populations fuient devant l'invasion de l'ennemi et viennent se réfugier en masse à Constantinople. Ces familles abandonnent ainsi leurs biens et leurs foyers, et n'émigrent dans la capitale que pour sauver leur vie et leur honneur. La misère qui entoure ces réfugiés est effrayante. Tous les efforts sont faits pour secourir ces malheureux qu'une simple assurance contre le retour des dernières atrocités aurait pourtant suffi pour retenir chez eux.

No. 156.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 37.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 20, 1878.*

I AM informed that 600 Cossacks entered Adrianople to-day.

No. 157.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 38.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 20, 1878.*

CONSUL GREEN telegraphs that yesterday Dulcigno fell into the hands of the Montenegrins, who will now probably operate against Scutari.

No. 158.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 39.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 20, 1878.*

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs from Keshan:—"No news of Suleiman Pasha. It is freezing, but there is no snow. Travelling everywhere possible, but progress slow."

No. 159.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 90.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 20, 1878.*

COUNT ZICHY informs me that he has learnt, from a trustworthy source, that General Gourko is marching upon Gallipoli.

No. 160.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 20, 1878.*

I AM informed that the officer mentioned in my telegram of yesterday has been arrested by the Greek authorities.

To-day's newspapers report that an insurrection has broken out in Thessaly.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 161.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 78.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 21, 1878.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me yesterday, and communicated to me the telegram, of which I inclose a copy,* requesting Her Majesty's Government to make energetic representations to the Greek Government with the view of preventing them from taking action against Turkey.

I told Musurus Pasha, in reply, that for months past Her Majesty's Government had done all in their power to impress upon the Cabinet of Athens the expediency of a pacific policy towards Turkey. If there were any reason to suppose that fresh representations in this sense could be usefully made I should be ready to make them, but I saw no practical advantage in the continued repetition of the same language. The Government of Greece were well acquainted with the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject, and I knew of no new argument that could be urged at this moment to render our advice more effective.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 162.

Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 42.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, January 21, 1878.*

I APPROVE the note addressed by your Excellency to M. de Giers, copy of which is inclosed in your despatch No. 28 of the 8th instant, relative to the direction of the fire of the Russian artillery on the hospital at Rustchuk.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 163.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 22.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 19 Janvier, 1878.*

JE vous transmets ci-après un télégramme de notre Ministre à Athènes. En communiquant le contenu de ce télégramme à Lord Derby, votre Excellence voudra bien prier sa Seigneurie, au nom de la Sublime Porte, de faire des démarches énergiques auprès du

* No. 163.

Cabinet d'Athènes en vue de l'empêcher d'entreprendre une action contre le Gouvernement Impérial.

Voici le télégramme de Photiadès-Bey :—

"De tous côtés on me signale une activité inquiétante déployée par le Gouvernement [illegible] et faisant prévoir une action immédiate. Des mouvements de troupes ont lieu depuis deux jours, ayant pour objectif nos frontières. La Compagnie de Navigation à Vapeur Hellénique a reçu l'ordre de tenir prêts tous ses bâtiments pour les mettre à la disposition du Gouvernement. J'apprends, en outre, que 'l'Omonia,' bateau de la Compagnie susmentionnée, est parti de Syra la nuit passée pour Chalcis, d'où il se dirigerait vers les côtes de la Thessalie pour y débarquer des munitions de guerre."

No. 164.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 93.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 21, 1878.*

SHOULD the Russians, as appears not impossible, take possession of Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, our communication with Europe and the fleet may be entirely cut off. I should be glad of your instructions should this happen. Count Zichy has telegraphed in the same sense to his Government.

No. 165.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 94.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 21, 1878.*

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from Vice-Consul at Gallipoli, dated to-day :—

"Governor informed that Russians are marching on Dardanelles, and that artillerymen are coming from Dardanelles to defend fortifications of Bulaïr, where there are now 300 soldiers, and 60 guns; orders received to defend place with aid of population, who are unarmed. Turkish families emigrating to Asia. Consuls advised Governor to stop emigration, so as to prevent eventual disorders, but Turks leaving, fearing that on account of resistance Russians will consider them as Bashi-Bazouks."

No. 166.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 21, 1878.*

FROM what I hear it seems probable that the Russians are proceeding to Constantinople or Gallipoli.

No. 167.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 21, 1878.*

I HAVE addressed a note to Prince Gortchakow, as instructed by your telegram of yesterday, urging immediate measures to arrest panic among Turkish population flying before the Russian armies, suggesting issue of a Proclamation.

No. 168.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 21, 1878.*

I HAVE given M. Tricoupi substance of your telegram of to-day.* He says that he will submit it this afternoon to a Cabinet Council, but that as there is a Ministerial crisis he can give me no answer to-day.

I hope to see him again to-morrow.

No. 169.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 21, 1878.*

SOME troops left Athens yesterday for Samia; more artillery are I am told to start to-morrow.

The state of affairs is very critical.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 170.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 96.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 22, 1878.*

VICE-CONSUL at Dardanelles telegraphs :—

"Authorities beginning to enrol Christians for military service at Gallipoli lines of defence. Resistance to enrolment is probable, and troubles are apprehended."

No. 171.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 22, 1878, 2·40 P.M.*

IT would be desirable that Her Majesty's Government should have early and authentic information as to any movements of the Russians in the direction of Gallipoli. The Vice-Consulates at Enos, Gallipoli, and Rodosto might procure such intelligence by sending persons in the direction in which the Russian advance is likely to take place.

If you think it advisable you may authorize them to incur the necessary expenditure for the purpose.

No. 172.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 39.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 10, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose an important article from the "Turquie," a semi-official journal, regarding the present state of affairs in Turkey, and her relations with the European Powers. Your Lordship will recollect that some time ago I informed your Lordship (in my despatch No. 1472, Confidential, of the 12th December), that some influential persons at the Porte were of opinion that if Turkey, abandoned by Europe, were compelled to conclude a peace alone with Russia, an attempt should be made to get rid of the capitulations, and that means might be found to induce Russia to agree to their abolition. This idea is reproduced in the inclosed article, and advocated with considerable ability.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

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* Repeating No. 147.

Inclosure in No. 172.

Extract from "La Turquie" of January 10, 1878.

L'Armistice.—L'indifférence avec laquelle l'Europe a accueilli la guerre avec la Russie fait à la Turquie, indifférence qui se manifeste aujourd'hui d'une façon encore plus éclatante, devait par une conséquence naturelle déterminer le pays à s'entendre directement avec son propre ennemi.

Mais avant d'en venir à cette résolution extrême, la Sublime Porte, fidèle aux dispositions du Traité de Paris qu'elle croyait toujours en vigueur, malgré la guerre, a cru devoir faire un dernier appel aux signataires de cet Acte International.

Cet appel franc et loyal n'a pas eu la vertu de décider l'Europe à sortir du système d'impassibilité dans lequel elle s'est renfermé dès le début de la crise Orientale.

Abandonnée par ses amis et par ses alliés, qui lui ont refusé jusqu'à leur concours moral, dans les circonstances critiques qu'elle vient de traverser, la Turquie ne pouvait plus hésiter à adopter la ligne de conduite que lui traçaient ses propres intérêts. Elle négocie en ce moment un armistice, et si l'Europe continue d'affecter à son égard la même indifférence, elle sera naturellement amenée à s'entendre directement avec la Russie sur les conditions de la paix future, sans se soucier davantage des intérêts et des convenances des autres Puissances qui ont signé le Traité de Paris et qu'elles laissent tomber elles-mêmes en désuétude avec une résignation si Chrétienne.

C'est pour avoir fait pendant vingt ans de la politique étrangère, et avoir complétement négligé son administration intérieure, que la Turquie était considérée généralement comme un corps malade dont l'Europe s'était arrogé le droit de régler les mouvements. Aujourd'hui que ce pays a prouvé sa vitalité, rien n'empêche les hommes à qui le Sultan a confié la direction des affaires de l'Etat de rompre avec ces malheureuses traditions du passé, de vouer tous leurs efforts au développement des nouvelles institutions Parlementaires, **et de réorganiser l'administration générale de façon à rendre l'Empire fort à l'intérieur et** respecté à l'extérieur.

Mais, avant tout, il importe qu'une paix assise sur des bases plus durables soit conclue entre les deux Puissances voisines: une paix juste et équitable qui ne laisse plus subsister, dans l'avenir, des germes de discorde entre les Parties Contractantes.

Les relations des deux pays, ainsi rétablies sur le pied où elles se trouvaient avant le Traité de 1856, chacun d'eux pourra se consacrer paisiblement à l'amélioration de son administration intérieure, qui forme l'élément constitutif de la grandeur et de la prospérité des Etats civilisés.

Quelques considérables que soient les sacrifices imposés à la Turquie par cette guerre qu'elle n'a point provoquée, elle possède encore des ressources morales et matérielles assez grandes pour se régénérer et s'élever au niveau des Etats les plus civilisés et les plus puissantes.

Quant aux rapports que la Turquie sera appelée à entretenir ensuite avec les autres Puissances, ils devront être déterminés exclusivement par les principes du droit international. Les exceptions dont elles ont joui jusqu'à présent cesseront par cela seul que le régime Parlementaire s'appliquera à améliorer toutes les branches de l'administration, et particulièrement celle de la justice, ne saurait plus tolérer à côté de lui les autres juridictions étrangères qui s'exercent en vertu des Capitulations et qui constituent une véritable anomalie. En un mot, la question d'Orient que l'Europe avait prise en main depuis 1853, et qu'elle a été impuissante à résoudre, ne sera plus de son domaine. C'est à la Turquie qu'il appartiendra désormais de la trancher définitivement.

La situation ainsi définie, les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris n'auront plus à se préoccuper de questions dont elles se sont complétement désintéressées depuis deux ans. **Elles s'occuperont de leurs affaires particulières, de même que la Turquie s'occupera** des siennes.

L'état d'infériorité dans lequel l'Europe se plaisait à tenir l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'à présent, grâce au système de concessions dans lequel était entrée la politique du pays, disparaîtra à jamais pour faire place à une politique réellement nationale et dont la base essentielle sera la réorganisation fondamentale de l'administration, et, comme conséquence naturelle, l'exclusion de toute ingérence étrangère dans nos affaires.

Loin donc de se plaindre de l'attitude des Puissances à son égard, la Turquie devrait, **au contraire, s'en féliciter, parce qu'il lui a été donné de se convaincre de cet axiôme, qu'il** faut avant tout compter sur ses propres forces et non sur l'appui venant de l'étranger.

C'est au développement de ces forces que les hommes qui sont au pouvoir et les représentants de la nation doivent vouer toute leur sollicitude. Ils veulent que la Turquie soit prospère à l'intérieur et se fasse respecter à l'extérieur comme Grande Puissance.

Le droit d'avoir une place honorable dans le concert Européen ne s'acquiert pas par des Traités, mais par les progrès moraux et matériels qu'une nation réalise chez elle.

La Turquie vient d'en faire la triste expérience. Cette leçon lui servira.

Elle avait été admise par le Traité de Paris à faire partie du concert Européen; les Puissances signataires de ce Traité étaient allées même jusqu'à lui garantir son intégrité **territoriale et à prendre l'engagement formel de ne point s'immiscer dans son administration** intérieure.

Qu'est-il arrivé?

Ce Traité a été violé dès le début par les Puissances mêmes qui l'ont signé, et aujourd'hui elles le laissent déchirer entièrement.

Quelle en est la raison!

C'est que la Turquie a eu la simplicité de croire que malgré les infractions dont il était l'objet, ce Traité la mettait à l'abri de tout danger, et qu'elle pouvait négliger impunément la réorganisation de son administration intérieure.

Elle s'est trompée en ayant l'air de vouloir tromper les autres. Elle ne le voit que trop maintenant.

Il importe donc de réparer cette faute presque impardonnable.

Le moment est on ne peut plus propice pour cela.

L'Empire Ottoman possède un Souverain plein de bonne volonté et de patriotisme, **dont la seule ambition est de rendre heureux les peuples placés sous son sceptre.** La Charte qu'il a octroyée au pays en est une démonstration éclatante.

Il dépend des hommes qui sont à la tête des affaires de restituer à la Turquie le rang **qui lui revient parmi les Grandes Puissances en appliquant fidèlement et dans toute son** étendue la Charte d'Abd-ul-Hamid, qui est seule capable d'assurer un brillant avenir à l'Empire des Sultans.

No. 173.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 23.)

(No. 44. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1878.

IT appears that Mahmoud Damat Pasha, who, as I have informed your Lordship, had resigned in consequence of the vote of the Chamber conveying a censure upon the Ministers for their management of the war, has been requested by the Sultan to retain his office of Grand Master of the Artillery for the present, and has been sent to inspect and report upon the condition of the lines of Buyuk-Tchekmedji. I understand, however, that it is the intention of His Majesty to dispense with Mahmoud Damat Pasha's services altogether before long.

I have, &c.

(Signed: A. H. LAYARD.

No. 174.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 23.)

(No. 45. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1878.

I AM informed from a trustworthy source that it is the intention of the Khedive to raise the auxiliary force now in Turkey in Europe to 30,000 or 35,000 men, and that Prince Hassan has received orders from His Highness not to obey any instructions, should they even come from the Sultan himself, respecting the disposition of the troops under his command, and to keep them concentrated in one place.

I have, &c.

(Signed: A. H. LAYARD.

No. 175.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 1. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, January 6, 1878.*

IT appears that when the Commissioners arrived here, now nearly a fortnight ago, instructions were given to the Mutessarif of Sphakia to communicate the fact to the inhabitants of his district. This he did by summoning several leading men among them to his presence, and acquainting them with the objects of Costaki Pasha's mission. When the latter arrived at the Mutessarif's head-quarters a few days afterwards, he was disappointed at finding that the influential inhabitants held aloof, and when the well-known Chiefs, Kostoros and Gogoni, were specially invited to appear, they sent to say that all power to treat with the Commissioners had passed from their hands, and had been delegated to the Committee. It was thus apparent that the object in view was to induce the Commissioners to treat with the Committee as with a legally-constituted body, and this they were not prepared to do; so that, finding their continued presence at Vamos served no useful purpose, they returned to Canea to deliberate on their future action. The beginning of the negotiations has thus been unfortunate, and I cannot but think that a mistake was committed in the first instance by the Vali neglecting to give publicity to the mission of Costaki Pasha by an authoritative Proclamation. This feeling, at any rate, has been pretty generally expressed by the Christians themselves. I find that Costaki Pasha himself is quite hopeful of succeeding in his mission, and his Excellency tells me that he proposes to return to Opokorona in a few days, and that he and his colleague are prepared to go to any place where the Christian Delegates lately elected may happen to be, and to discuss with them the question of their demands, without, however, considering them as qualified to deal finally with it. For this purpose, it would be necessary, his Excellency thinks, shortly to convoke the General Assembly (which, in ordinary circumstances, meets in May), in order, if possible, to bring about a consensus of opinion between the representatives of the two rival communities.

For the purpose of furthering the desire of Costaki Pasha to get speech with the Christian Delegates, who form a sort of consultative body of the original Committee, I have induced a certain Dr. Aggelides, who is much respected by them, to be the bearer of a letter written by Mr. Vice-Consul Monzzo, requesting three or four of those Delegates to come into town to confer with Costaki Pasha previously to his Excellency visiting them; and on the solemn assurances of Costaki Pasha that their persons would be respected, Mr. Monzzo has told them that they have no cause to fear for their personal safety. I am in daily expectation of seeing these Delegates appear. I believe it is their intention to demand the release from imprisonment of the ex-Deputy Argyraki before consenting to treat with the Commission, and Costaki Pasha thinks that he will be able to satisfy them on this point.

Although a hitch has thus appeared at the outset of the proceedings, Costaki Pasha appears sanguine of a favourable result, and he founds his hopes on the evident desire of the majority of the Christians of every district, except perhaps in Sphakia, to come to some agreement with the Mussulmans rather than face the terrible alternative of civil war. This feeling, to the reality of which I can bear testimony, furnishes, indeed, a solid foundation of hope; but I cannot disguise from myself that the strong disinclination of the Mussulmans to yield to the pretensions of the Christians is calculated to mar the prospects of a compromise; and this not so much because the Mussulmans could be made to yield, but because the local authorities sympathise too warmly with their feelings to be willing to force them to yield. Meanwhile valuable time is being lost, and the seeds of disorder which are being sown every day are placing in jeopardy the only hope that remains of avoiding the manifold horrors of a religious war.

While I write, Dr. Aggelidis has returned from Apokorona. He brings a letter in answer to that of the Vice-Consul, signed by certain of the newly-elected Delegates, in which they state that, in the face of the illegal arrest of the ex-Deputy Argyraki, they can no longer trust their persons within the reach of the Ottoman authorities. They add that they would be perfectly ready to treat with the Commissioners if they were acquainted with the extent of their powers, or even assured of their authority; for that, contrary to custom in such cases, their arrival had not been announced by a general Proclamation, nor their credentials exhibited.

Costaki Pasha and his colleague intend, they inform me, to issue a Proclamation without delay, and then to start for the country a second time.

Certain members of the Committee write a letter to me begging me to solicit Her Majesty's Embassy to obtain the release of Argyraki. The Committee now employs an an official seal with the words "The General Assembly of the Cretans."

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 176.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 2. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, January 7, 1878.*

IN my despatch No. 83 of the 31st ultimo, I had the honour to state that the Vali of Crete, Samih Pasha, had suddenly gone to Rethymo, which town seems to have been, since his Excellency's return, the scene of some commotion. Mr. Trifilli, the Consular Agent, informs me that the Christians were thrown into a state of alarm in consequence of the numbers of armed Mussulmans who thronged the streets, and who had just brought in their families from the country. The Christians of the surrounding villages, who seem with even less cause to have caught the contagion of fear, also sought permission to enter, which, according to Mr. Trifilli, was accorded them by the Vali; but when a number of them presented themselves at the gate, seeking admission, the Mussulman mob, armed as they were, set upon them and drove them away, crying out, "It is the people which rules here, not the Government." Mr. Trifilli, who, with his dragoman, was an eye-witness of the scene, was in his turn attacked, and obliged to take refuge in a neighbouring house. This occurred a few hours after the Vali's departure, and the following day Her Majesty's ship "Rupert" arrived. The Mutessarif Pasha called on Mr. Trifilli to express his regret at what had occurred, and informed him that two of those who had pursued him were already in custody. The Consular Agent has very properly demanded satisfaction and the punishment of his assailants, but he has little hope that the Governor, who stands in awe of the Moslem populace, will long retain the men in prison. As soon as I was made aware of the occurrence I called on Samih Pasha, and urged on his Excellency the necessity of making an example of the ringleaders of the attack on Mr. Trifilli, as otherwise that gentleman's life would not be safe. His Excellency has promised me satisfaction, and I believe would willingly give it, but he is prone to yield too readily to the opposition which a resolute act would be sure to encounter. The attack on the Consular Agent has been acknowledged and apologized for, but under present circumstances the severe punishment of the offenders seems called for.

The news of the excitement in Rethymo was followed in a day or two by the intelligence that similar scenes were occurring in Candia. Telegrams were received by all my colleagues to the effect that the Moslems in that region too were abandoning their homes, and that the Christians were completely cowed by the numbers of armed men in the streets. Mr. Vice-Consul Calocherino had informed me a few days before that the Mahommedan peasantry were bringing in their household stuff from several villages, which he justly considered a most uncalled-for proceeding, inasmuch as there was not the slightest disposition apparent on the part of the Christians to attack the Mussulmans, nor have any gatherings occurred there such as have been witnessed here. The Vice-Consul further informed me that three Christian peasants had been murdered in cold blood by a party of Moslems, who had cut off the nose and ears of one of their victims, whose relations refused to bury him till the act had been testified to by the local authorities. I brought these things at once to the notice of Samih Pasha, who professed to know nothing of them, but his Excellency, nevertheless, started early the following morning for Candia, and has not yet returned.

In this part of the island matters do not wear a more promising aspect. The Vali, who at first offered a strenuous opposition to the entry of the Mahommedan peasantry into the town, has at length withdrawn it, and even sent the Ottoman iron-clad "Orchanie" and a corvette to bring away their families from Selino. Those vessels landed a few days ago at Suda Bay 2,600 women and children, who have been distributed for the most part in the country houses and farms of the local Mahommedan gentry who own the greater part of the plain of Canea. In Selino the Christians exhausted every expedient to convince their Moslem neighbours that they harboured no evil designs against them, even offering to place the children of several of their leading men as hostages in their hands.

There can be little doubt that some sinister influences have been at work in Canea, as well as in Rethymo and Candia, to have brought about so general a flight of the Moslems to the garrison towns. It is true that there is the presence of the Committee in

Apokorona, and the landing of three or four Chiefs, with a few followers, which may be pointed to as accounting to some extent for their fears, but no acts of violence have been committed of a nature to justify a panic. Moslem intrigues were known to have been set on foot last autumn, both here and in Rethymo, to incite the peasants to quit their homes, and similar methods have probably again been used for the same deliberate purpose. Constant communications are known to be kept up by a clique of Mussulmans here with others in Rethymo and Candia, and it is surmised that these persons would willingly provoke an insurrection in the island, in the expectation of its resulting in the complete ruin of the Christians, who, hemmed in among the mountains, would, they think, soon be starved into submission.

The presence of so many armed peasants in this neighbourhood, without occupation or means of livelihood, is producing its natural consequences. The roads are no longer safe for Christians, who fear to enter the town singly, as formerly, but come in in little parties for mutual protection. The Christians of the district of Rethymo, refused an entrance into the town, are removing their effects to the mountains, and the Christian villages round here are likewise being abandoned by their inhabitants, who seek shelter in Lakos and other mountain villages. In Lakos no zaptiehs now venture to show themselves, and the people have appointed a police of their own.

Although during the flight of the Moslem peasantry, which took place in the summer, no harm was done to their property in their absence, a danger exists lest the Christians may no longer exercise the same self-restraint when they see their brethren maltreated here, and even murdered with circumstances of cruelty, as in the instance near Candia. I have just been informed by the Monavin of Selino that the Mahommedans had scarcely abandoned their houses in that district before the zaptiehs began to pillage them, and they were soon joined in the work by Moslems of a low class. This testimony has been confirmed by a Mussulman oil-merchant who was present, and who declares that no Christians took part in the work of pillage. The rations of the zaptiehs having just been reduced from 33 to 22 ounces of dry bread a-day, it is no wonder that, half starved and unpaid, this long-suffering body of men should have at last broken through the restraints of discipline.

I learn that the visit of Her Majesty's ship "Rupert" to Rethymo, and subsequently to Candia, had a tranquillizing effect on the timid Christians of those towns, and it seems to me desirable for a man-of-war to be now stationed in Suda Bay in case of any sudden disturbance arising in any part of the island.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 177.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 2. Decypher.)
My Lord, *Tiflis, January 11, 1878.*

FOURTEEN officers gone from this to Persia. Movement against Batoum continuing. In the hospitals of which I have an account are 8,000 wounded and 15,000 sick Muscovite soldiers. I expect further returns in a short time. Total invalids not less than 30,000. Turkish troops suffering from fever, 5,000. Recruits coming daily.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 178.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 3. Decypher.)
My Lord, *Tiflis, January 11, 1878.*

MAP has been made for Government of St. Petersburgh, including Erzeroum and Bajazet, and excluding Batoum. North of Persia being surveyed by Russian officers. Another division on road to this place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 179.

Mr. Erskine to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 3.)
My Lord, *Stockholm, January 18, 1878.*

FOR the last few days the Stockholm papers have been discussing a statement which seems to have originated with the "Pall Mall Gazette," but to have been subsequently repeated and adopted by a St. Petersburgh journal called the "Herold," to the effect that Russia was seeking to induce the other Baltic States to join her in constituting the Baltic a *mare clausum* in so far as other maritime States are concerned.

I should not have thought it necessary to trouble your Lordship about so preposterous a statement had I not observed that it appears to have been very generally mentioned in foreign papers as a plan having some serious foundation.

I have therefore made inquiry here, and am assured on the best authority that, in so far as this country and Denmark are concerned, there is not the least foundation for the story.

If I am not mistaken, the idea of excluding the navies of all non-littoral States from the Baltic was first seriously noticed about a year ago in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," but it was then attributed to the German Government, and had all the appearance of one of those mischievous fabrications to which the French press so frequently have recourse for the purpose of injuring Germany with foreign Powers.

In the present instance, however, the paternity of the scheme is, I believe, assigned to Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

No. 180.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 97.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 22, 1878.*

VICE-CONSUL at Gallipoli telegraphs to-day:—

"Communications with Demotica and Ozun Koupru interrupted since yesterday. Russians said to be at former place. Fears entertained that soon Keshan will be cut off, thus leaving us without direct communication with the capital. Turkish families gone to Asia. Three hundred and eighty artillerymen arrived in the night. Though it is reported that the fleet and troops are coming from Constantinople, as also force under Suleiman Pasha, who was yesterday at Rusgurnurzina, authorities prepare to leave town. Great panic among non-Mussulman population."

No. 181.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 22, 1878.*

THE Ministry resigned to-day.

No. 182.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 100.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 23, 1878.*

VICE-CONSUL at Gallipoli telegraphs the arrival of Hussein Pasha from the Dardanelles, and of five battalions from Silistria, through Constantinople.

Local authorities will remain; they believe that Ozun Kupru is not occupied by the Russians, but the authorities and telegraph officials have left. Russian occupation of Demotica confirmed, and a column believed to be marching on Dedeagatch. Telegraphic communication with Keshan and Malgara still open.

No. 183.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24, 1878.)

(No. 189.)

My Lord, *Tehran, December 5, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the statement which Mr. Consul-General Abbott communicated to me in the second paragraph of his despatch of the 12th November, copy of which has been forwarded by him direct to your Lordship, as to the military camp recently stationed at Khoi by the Persian Government having been maintained there by the Persian authorities in deference to the desire of Russia, has been denied in the most solemn manner by the Shah's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 184.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24, 1878.)

(No. 191.)

My Lord, *Tehran, December 11, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Colonel Zeloni, who has been recently appointed Military Attaché to the Russian Legation here, has arrived at Tehran, and that General Franchini and the officers who accompanied him to Persia are about to quit this country, having been recalled to Tiflis by the Grand Duke Michael.

General Franchini called upon me yesterday to take leave, and stated that on the Shah's return next week from a shooting excursion in the neighbourhood, he would be presented to His Majesty by M. Zinovico and leave next day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 185.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24, 1878.)

(No. 192.)

My Lord, *Tehran, December 12, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 189 of the 5th instant, reporting the denial given by the Persian Government to the statement referred to in Mr. Abbott's despatch to me No. 86, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that at a subsequent interview which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, his Highness stated that on orders having been issued for the dismissal to their homes for the winter of the regiments forming the camp at Khoi, M. Zinovico verbally protested against this being done, on the ground that there was every probability that if the force was withdrawn, the Turkish Koords of the Van districts would pass through the Persian territory and make an attack upon the Russian territory of Erivan, and that, in that event, Persia would be held responsible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 186.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 51.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1878.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 654 of the 30th October last, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Consul Blunt, in which he comments upon the atrocities alleged to have been committed upon the Jewish inhabitants of Kyzanlik during the first invasion of Roumelia by the Russians. Mr. Blunt's despatch of the 29th August to which he refers, was forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 1029 of the 1st September last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 186.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, January 9, 1878.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 13th November last, inclosing the copy of a letter addressed to the Earl of Derby by the Anglo-Jewish Association, and the extract contained in it from the "Jewish Chronicle," detailing atrocities alleged to have been perpetrated upon the Jewish community at Kyzanlik, I have the honour to state that the inquiries made by me at Kyzanlik (where I received your Excellency's despatch) and since my return to Adrianople among the fugitives still here, have elicited no new facts in addition to those recorded in the inclosures to my despatch to your Excellency of the 29th August last.

The assertion made at the outset of the extract in question that the mass of the Jewish community at Kyzanlik, at the approach of General Gourko's army, on the advice of the Kaïmakam, "followed the Turkish inhabitants who sought shelter in a forest on the Balkans," is, with its attendant allegations, certainly unfounded. Few Turkish and no Jewish inhabitants left the town prior to the Russian occupation; and there is every reason to believe that all the circumstances set forth in the extract beyond those reported by me are exaggerations of occurrences atrocious enough in themselves to need no imaginary colouring by the sufferers to add to the feeling of horror which the real facts arouse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 187.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 13, 1878.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 905 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Consul Zohrab, in which he expresses his thanks for your Lordship's approval of his exertions in aid of the sick and wounded at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 187.

Consul Zohrab to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Constantinople, January 12, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Excellency's despatch of the 6th instant, conveying to me the expression of the Earl of Derby's satisfaction at my exertions on behalf of the sick and wounded of the 4th Army Corps at Erzeroum, elicited by your having kindly considered those efforts worthy of official notice.

I beg to offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks for this mark of your Excellency's satisfaction.

My efforts to be useful in the cause of humanity would have met with but poor success had I not been most ably seconded by Dr. Fetherstonhaugh, who heartily entered into the work, and, by ability and entire forgetfulness of self, made those endeavours successful in saving the lives of hundreds of men whose patience under privation and suffering made them eminently worthy of the succour sent to them from England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 188.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 55.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 13, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation of the Imperial Hatt, or Decree, naming the new Grand Vizier and the other Ministers. It is considered that the tone of this document is warlike.

Hamdi Pasha, the Minister of Police, against whom there have been constant and well-founded complaints, has been dismissed and replaced by Mehmet Pasha, the "Prefet," or Governor, of Peru.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 188.

Extract from "La Turquie" of January 12.

Decree appointing Ahmed Hamdi Pasha Grand Vizier.

Mon illustre Vézir Ahmed Hamdi Pacha,

EN raison de la gravité et de l'importance des circonstances présentes, ainsi que de la nécessité de mesures promptes à adopter, un changement complet et fondamental de Ministère était devenu nécessaire.

Nous avons apprécié et nous apprécions la haute intelligence et les capacités dont son Altesse Edhem Pacha a donné maintes preuves à notre grande satisfaction. Mais l'état de santé de son Altesse exige qu'elle se tienne éloignée pour quelque temps des affaires publiques.

En conséquence, vu votre mérite éprouvé, la droiture de vos sentiments et de vos idées, nous vous confions la haute et importante dignité de Grand Vézir.

Nous nommons également :

Ministre de l'Intérieur : le Sénateur Saïd Pacha, ex-Secrétaire du Palais Impérial :
Ministre de la Liste Civile : le Sénateur Namyk Pacha ;
Ministre des Finances : Kiani Pacha, ex-Directeur des Contributions Indirectes :
Ministre de l'Instruction Publique : le Sénateur Ahmed Véfik Pacha.
Directeur des Contributions Indirectes : le Député Sadik Pacha.

Vu l'importance du Gouvernement Général du Vilayet de Trébizonde, nous désignons pour ce poste Youssouf Pacha, ex-Ministre des Finances.

Kémal Pacha, ex-Ministre de l'Instruction Publique, est nommé Sénateur.

Il est évident qu'en ce moment la chose la plus importante, celle qui doit attirer toute notre attention, c'est l'aggression de l'ennemi.

Les forces militaires que nous avions mises sur le pied de guerre pour résister étaient égales à celles de l'ennemi ; nous en avons eu des preuves, au début des hostilités, en remportant de glorieux et nombreux succès.

La cause principale de nos revers récents doit être principalement attribuée aux fautes et aux erreurs de quelques commandants de corps d'armée. On procédera d'une manière scrupuleuse à l'examen de leurs actes et on décidera ce qu'il convient de faire **pour leurs actions.**

Nous désirons que, d'accord avec nos autres Ministres, vous travailliez avec ardeur, que vous mettiez à profit les avertissements du passé, que vous écoutiez les sages et bienveillants conseils des amis de notre Empire et que vous vous occupiez des garanties de l'intégrité et de l'indépendance de notre Etat.

Le 7 Moharrem, 1295 de l'Hégire.

No. 189.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 62.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 14, 1878.*

THE appointment of Hamdi Pasha as Grand Vizier is believed to be but a provisional arrangement to prepare the way for Said Pasha, who was recently the Sultan's Chief

Secretary, and has now been appointed Minister of the Interior, in order that he may not be advanced at once to the highest rank and dignity in the State. Said Pasha, who only lately held a very subordinate post at the Porte, has the reputation of being a man of considerable intelligence. He was, I believe, placed about the person of the Sultan, over whom he has gained much influence, by Mahmoud Damat Pasha. I cannot say that he has made a very good impression upon me, but I am not sufficiently well acquainted with him to form a fair judgment of his character.

Said Pasha, recently the head of the Sultan's military household, and now Minister of Marine, has been promoted to the rank of Mushir and Vizier, and has been named "Maréchal du Palais." He still exercises much influence over the Sultan, to whom he is sincerely devoted. He is an upright and honourable man. He was educated at Woolwich, and is known for his English sympathies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 190.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 70.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 16, 1878.*

THE forebodings of those who foretold the infinite misery and suffering that would be brought upon this unhappy country by a wanton war of aggression have now been more than fulfilled. The Mussulman populations, with the horrors committed upon the Mohammedans during General Gourko's raid of last summer fresh in their memories, are flying terrified before the Russian advance. In many districts the Christians, and the Jews, who were the special victims of Bulgarian cruelties, are accompanying them. The towns and villages are deserted, and the property of their inhabitants abandoned. Trains, with from 8,000 to 10,000 of these wretched fugitives, have been arriving daily at Constantinople. Only open trucks can, in most cases, be provided for them. The weather has been intensely cold, the snow falling heavily. The poor creatures are packed together standing, and are thus kept sometimes for more than twenty-four hours without food or shelter. As the trains arrive at the stations the bodies of men, women, and children, frozen to death, or who have succumbed to illness, are dragged out of the waggons. Even the tops of the closed carriages are occupied by the women and children, who in some instances, numbed by the cold, roll off and are killed.

Long streams of fugitives, chiefly women and children, on foot, are taking the direction of Salonica, Rodosto, and other places to the south of the line of railway between Adrianople and the capital. They have abandoned everything they possess, and die by numbers on the way from hunger and cold.

A panic has seized the populations of Adrianople, Philippopoli, Tatar-Bazardjik, and other towns. The railway stations are invaded by vast crowds, who attempt to enter the trains, and overpower the officials, who are unable to keep them back. The scenes described to me by Mr. Blunt, Mr. Calvert, and several gentlemen whom I have sent to afford some relief to this suffering and perishing multitude, from Lady Burdett-Coutts' Compassionate Fund, are perfectly heartrending.

Major de Winton, with a devotion and self-sacrifice beyond praise, assisted by the members of the Embassy, when able to leave their heavy work, and by Mr. Master, an English gentleman who has rendered most valuable help in the distribution of the Compassionate Fund, has laboured indefatigably, night and day, to succour and relieve the unhappy fugitives arriving continuously by train in Constantinople. They are mostly women and children. There is scarcely more than 5 per cent. of men. They include persons in the better classes of life as well as the poorer inhabitants of the villages. They come here in the utmost destitution. They are seen with their famishing children searching for dry bones, or any refuse, to appease their hunger.

The Turkish authorities, at my request, have given over to Major de Winton a large building, or khan, close to the railway station, in which some 1,500 of the most destitute and suffering fugitives can be temporarily received. As soon as possible they are drafted off to different quarters in Constantinople and to villages on the Bosphorus. The mosques are filled with them. Major de Winton has established soup-kitchens, and is able to give some nourishment to those who are in the greatest want. The Government officials do what they can, but they have no organization or system, and have lost their heads in face of this appalling amount of misery and suffering.

The resignation with which these poor Turkish fugitives bear their misfortunes, their

dignified and self-possessed bearing, and their kindly and considerate treatment of each other, in the midst of their terrible trials, furnish ample proof of the true nobility of a race which has been denounced, by those who have only learnt to know it from its enemies and calumniators, as "anti-human" and "unspeakable." Those Englishmen who have been present at the arrival of the starving refugees at Constantinople, like every English officer who has been brought into relation with the Turkish soldier, speak in admiration of the great qualities of a people which has been made the victim of ambition and of unreasoning prejudice and passion.

The general flight of the Mussulman population in Roumelia has seriously impeded the Turkish military operations. The fugitives have, in some places, even seized the ammunition and other waggons, thrown out their contents, and occupied them themselves. They have besought the troops not to abandon them to the mercy of the Russians, Servians, and Bulgarians, and the march of the forces which Suleiman Pasha has been endeavouring to concentrate in all haste at Philippopolis and Adrianople has been greatly delayed, if it can be effected. The panic may be unreasonable, but, after what occurred last year in the Tundja Valley, as described in Consul Blunt's exhaustive Report, it can scarcely be wondered at.

As far as I have hitherto been informed, the Mussulmans have not been guilty of any excesses or outrages upon the Bulgarian Christians, although they attribute to him their unparalleled misfortunes. The Turkish commanders have even spared the Bulgarian villages out of feelings of humanity, although they would have been fully justified by the exigencies of war had they destroyed them and laid waste the country on the approach of the invaders. They have been strongly urged to do so by European military advisers, as the best, if not only means, of checking the Russian advance, but they have declined to act upon the advice.

Although Constantinople is now crowded with the miserable victims of the Russian invasion, who excite the deepest sympathy amongst their fellow Mahommedans, and the greatest indignation against their Christian persecutors, the city is perfectly quiet. There is, no doubt, a good deal of alarm amongst the Europeans and Greeks, but, as far as I can judge, there is at present no ground for it. Should, however, the Russians occupy or turn Adrianople and threaten Constantinople, the case may be very different.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 191.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby:—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 73.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 16, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a summary, by Mr. Jocelyn, of the debate in the Turkish Chamber of Deputies during the last week, to which I would venture to call your Lordship's special attention. It will, I think, prove to your Lordship that there is a real spirit of independence in this Assembly, and that, with proper guidance and support, it might perform most important functions in reforming the administration of Turkey. It would be a matter of deep regret if an attempt to establish a Parliament which promises so well, and which affords evidence of the real desire of the Sultan to introduce constitutional institutions into his Empire, were frustrated by foreign interference. I trust that England will at least feel some sympathy for those who are thus struggling for the welfare and liberties of their country, although she may be unwilling to hold out a hand to help them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 191.

Summary of Proceedings in the Ottoman Parliament.

COMPLAINTS being raised as to the inaccuracy of the reports furnished by the "Official Gazette" of the proceedings in the Chamber, it was decided by a large majority on the 9th January to transfer the publication of them to another journal.

Khasito Effendi, deputy for Jannina, moved that an inquiry should be made into the conduct of the Generals Mehemet Ali and Chefket Pashas, and proposed that they should be summoned before the Chamber to account for the reverses which they had sustained during the present campaign.

A somewhat lengthy discussion followed this proposition, which, as it stood, could not be carried out, as neither of the Generals in question were responsible Ministers, but it was at length decided that the Minister of War should be called upon to give the explanations suggested, should this course be approved by the Committee to whom the question was referred.

Matters affecting the rules of order of the Chamber were then discussed at leisure, chiefly as to the liberty of reading in lieu of speaking, and the custody of the archives of the Parliament, after which, the members for Constantinople, Aleppo, and Adrianople commenced a vehement attack upon the Government for the delay which had been shown in presenting the Budget of the present year to the Chamber. Other laws, they maintain, of minor importance, were always being submitted to them, while the great reforms mentioned in the Sultan's speech were kept back until the end of the Session.

Ekrem Bey, the only Councillor of State present, feebly represented in reply that the laws in question were being carefully prepared by the Council, and would all be submitted to the Chamber in good time.

Roupen Effendi, member for Adrianople, however, cut short the explanation in a violent tirade against the Council of State and its functions. It was of no use whatever, it had not elaborated a single law of importance, and had quite lately sent down to the Parliament one regarding the (cour des comptes) which was merely an appendix to the Financial Law of the Realm, and constituted, he declared, a positive insult to their Chamber.

The speaker was warmly supported by several members, who all inveighed bitterly against the Council of State, and demanded that the law respecting the reforms of the police and the Courts of Justice should be speedily submitted to them. During this expression of the opinion of the Chamber, *Bedran Effendi*, deputy for Syria, declared that in his country there were 200 policemen who were no better than so many thieves. How urgently therefore was the law reforming the police required.

After a lively discussion as to the attributes and advantages of the new Court proposed by the Government, which is suppose to offer effective means of controlling the public expenditure, the House decided to leave its further discussion to a Committee, and adjourned.

Sitting of January 10.

The debate of the previous day was resumed, and gave occasion for the delivery of several powerful and eloquent appeals against the mal-administration of justice prevailing in the provinces.

Bedran Effendi, Syrian Deputy, spoke very warmly on the subject, asking that the consideration of minor laws and reforms might for the present be dispensed with, and those dealt with which affect the safety of life and property and the protection of the honour of the people themselves.

It is not of necessity to have schools of jurisprudence, desirable as they no doubt are, he said; the laws exist—plenty of them—but they are never executed faithfully and loyally. He concluded by urging for the laws on the police and the reform of the Tribunals.

The views expressed by this orator were supported by many that followed him. Their speeches were characterized by unwonted energy of manner, and by the true appreciation of the necessary reforms in the administration which they displayed.

The Government must be made to understand, one of the members said, that we are here for the purpose of compelling it to execute its own laws, otherwise why lose our time in talking. Let us close the Chamber and go home.

The member of Aleppo drew a dark and vivid picture of the actual state of the administration of justice in the country, and demanded a radical and speedy change, in terms which were loudly applauded on all sides.

Ikiades Effendi, a member of the Council of State, promises that the laws required should be very shortly forthcoming.

Suleiman Effendi, of Nisch, then rose and accused the Government of gross impartiality in distributing decorations, promotions, and rewards to the generals and officers in the present war, but in failing to punish any of those who had so much contributed to the disasters of the campaign. He openly demanded their punishment.

A warm debate ensued, and at its conclusion *Manouk Effendi*, of Aleppo, declared that many of the Government officials who had been removed from their employment in consequence of the accusation of the Chamber during last Session had now been replaced and given other responsible employment.

He offered to name them, should the Chamber wish it, but no expression of opinion was taken on the matter.

Sitting of January 12.

The President informed the Chamber of his having presented their Address to His Majesty the Sultan, and of its gracious reception by him, after which Ikiades Effendi, Counsellor of State, in a lengthy discourse, undertook the defence of the body to which he belonged, so rudely attacked in the previous sitting, explaining its functions, and apparently coming to the conclusion that it was much overworked, and, on the contrary, a most useful and industrious institution, having during eleven months given birth to thirty-three laws and regulations.

He then went on to defend, as a class, the Government servants and functionaries abroad, who had been the object of the former attack. He knew that some were corrupt, because underpaid, and threw the responsibility of this, to some extent, on the Chamber for having reduced last year's Budget.

The Member for Aidin, however, would not admit the defence. He spoke of his own district: that in it judicial torture was practised, corruption pervaded all classes of officials, and the police, instead of protecting, pillaged the population.

Several members then declared themselves offended by personal allusions which had been made in the speech of the Councillor of State, Ikiadis Effendi, and demanded their retraction. Upon the President calling upon the Councillor of State to make his excuses, he pleaded his imperfect power of oratory, and declared that he had no intention of wounding the sensibilities of the Assembly.

Several members demanded explanations with regard to abuses of various descriptions said to have occurred in their respective provinces, and the Member for Scutari, in Albania, expressed his anxiety lest his city should fall into the hands of the enemy.

The surrender of the army of Shipka was afterwards alluded to, and explanations required, but the President reminded the Chamber that the new Ministry had only just taken office, and that every allowance must be made for its recent accession to power.

Sitting of January 14.

The Chamber was informed of what had been done to relieve the wants of the numerous refugees now pouring into Constantinople by thousands daily.

The Yeni-Djami Mosque had been selected as a shelter, and its attendants were to supply food to the refugees. A subscription was opened by a leading Member of the Chamber, and the list was rapidly filled, each Deputy obliging himself to give at least 500 piastres to the fund. The matter was then referred to the Committee, and it was decided to call upon the Senate, as forming part of the Parliament, to give some assistance.

A final proposition was made to send as many as possible of the refugees to Asia Minor, where there was plenty of room and facilities for their temporary accommodation. This was unanimously accepted, and referred to the Committee.

Some technicalities affecting the length of daily attendance to be required in the Chamber were then discussed; after which Abdoul Bey, of Janniua, spoke at great length upon the miserable want of education to be found in the Empire, declaring that in his province of Albania the profoundest ignorance prevailed, and no schools existed at all. Some discussion and divergence of opinion followed this speech, but in general the Chamber assented. Minor questions were then asked, and referred to Committees; when Khalil Ghanea, Syrian Deputy, reminded the House that they were losing their precious time over trivial matters while the enemy was at the very gates; and in a fervent speech demanded that Ministers should be called upon to give the Chamber, from time to time, news of the situation. The Chamber, however, fearing to embarrass the action of the new Cabinet, rejected this proposal, and passed to the order of the day, and shortly afterwards adjourned a debate upon the emission of 6,000,000*l.* in paper-money, which Government propose to make, and has submitted to them.

No. 192.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 24.*)

(No. 74.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 16, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from the British Vice-Consul at Gallipoli, reporting the suspension of the order for the enrolment of Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 192.

Vice-Consul Odoni to Mr. Layard.

Gallipoli, le 14 Janvier, 1878.

Excellence,

FAISANT suite à ma dépêche du 7 de ce mois, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer que l'autorité locale n'a pas mis à exécution l'ordre d'enrôlement des rayas.

L'Evêque Grec a été informé par le Patriarche qu'il y a eu ordre de suspendre, pour le moment, l'enrôlement des rayas. Les Arméniens ont aussi reçu un tel avis. Mais comme on suppose que les rayas d'ici seront appelés à la défense des lignes de fortifications de Bonlair, l'émigration continue sur une grande échelle, malgré les efforts de l'autorité pour l'empêcher.

Les soixante-seize Musulmans qui ont été choisis comme militaires se sont cachés, et hier, jour fixé pour leur départ, la police n'a pu mettre la main que sur une vingtaine.

Je viens d'apprendre que l'autorité a fait demander tous les propriétaires des bans pour les interner que dans leurs établissements on logera des émigrés.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) AMIL. ODONI.

No. 193.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 24.*)

(No. 12.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 11, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I am informed that about 250 armed men started from the Pirœus the day before yesterday for Thessaly in sailing vessels. The Greek Government had been warned, I am told, by the Turkish Legation of their intended departure.

I am also informed that arms are being clandestinely forwarded to Crete, and that insurrectionary bands are also leaving Greece for that island.

I have forwarded this information to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 194.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 24.*)

(No. 13. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 11, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to state to your Lordship that I heard a report this morning that a band of armed men had left the Pirœus harbour the day before yesterday for the coast of Thessaly. I made further inquiries as to the truth of this report in the course of the day and learned, upon, I think, good authority, that a band of about 250 men, said to have been organized by Leonidas Bulgaris, who has been already mentioned to your Lordship as being in connection with Committees for promoting insurrections in Turkey, and who is said to have been presented by General Ignatiew with 10,000 stand of arms, had left in sailing-vessels for Thessaly. I was also informed that the Turkish Legation had told the Hellenic Government that they had information as to the intended departure of this band; the Greek Government can, therefore, not plead ignorance of the intentions of these men

and, indeed, it appears as if the Government, or at any rate some members of it, had connived at the expedition.

I have also learned that some more Cretan Chiefs, who have been refugees in Greece, had left, or were on the point of leaving, with some Greek volunteers for Crete, for the purpose of joining in an insurrectionary movement in that island, and that arms are being clandestinely sent there from Greece.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 195.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 14. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 11, 1878.*

WITHIN the last few days rumours of discord in the Cabinet have been more rife than usual. I questioned M. Tricoupi to-day upon the subject, and his Excellency replied that some members of the Cabinet were in favour of action, while others were in favour of inaction.

M. Tricoupi appeared anxious as to the result of a reported victory of the Russians near Kyzanlik, in which 25,000 Turks are said to have been taken prisoners, and at the reported advance of the Russians to Adrianople, successes on the part of the Russians, especially to the south of the Balkans, being looked upon in Greece as a danger to Hellenism, and he seemed anxious to know what the policy of Her Majesty's Government would be. I told him that I thought he would be able to judge better of the policy of Her Majesty's Government when Parliament met on the 17th instant, to which he replied that that was still some days off and that events must now be timed by hours rather than by days.

M. Tricoupi has always expressed himself to me as desirous that Greece should fulfil her international engagements with regard to Turkey, and as opposed to all measures with a view of promoting insurrections in that Empire, and I was informed to-day that he so strongly disapproved of the departure of the band for Thessaly not having been stopped, and which I have reported to your Lordship in my preceding despatch, that he was on the point of resigning his office last night. I have also been told that he and M. Zaïmis, the Minister of Justice, had endeavoured to dissuade His Majesty the King from visiting Chalcis, as reported to your Lordship in my No. 372 of the 29th ultimo, and from which town His Majesty returned about a week ago.

I mention these reports to your Lordship with all reserve.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 196.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 17.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 15, 1878.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 12 and 13 of the 10th instant, reporting the departure from Greece of a band of men for Thessaly, I am informed that many of these men are natives of that province, and that they are proceeding there with a view of disseminating themselves through the country in order to promote an insurrectionary movement.

The insurrectionary Committees in Greece are at present, I believe, very active, and Colonel Becker, who has taken an active part in Servia against Turkey, and who is, I believe, connected with insurrectionary Committees, has lately arrived in Athens.

An article published in the "Messager d'Athènes" of the 13th instant, which I do myself the honour to inclose for your Lordship's information, states that the moment is now favourable for an insurrection in the Greek provinces, and that they may be too late if they await the conclusion of an armistice between the Russians and the Turks.

If the provinces of Thessaly and Epirus rise in revolt against the Turkish rule the Greek Government may endeavour to occupy those provinces under the pretext of protecting the Christians.

Mr. Wood, Her Majesty's Consul at Patras, writes to me that the whole population has "gone wild" with the idea of obtaining Thessaly and Epirus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 197.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 18. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 16, 1878.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 14, Confidential, of the 11th instant, in which I reported to your Lordship a difference of opinion in the Cabinet as to the policy to be pursued with regard to Turkey, I am informed to-day that M. Coumoundouros, Minister of the Interor, M. Tricoupi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and M. Delyanni, Minister of Public Instruction, are in favour of an adventurous policy; and that M. Zaïmis, Minister of Justice, and M. Deligeorges, Minister of Finance, are of a contrary opinion, and that they threaten to separate themselves from their colleagues. It is also reported that M. Tricoupi wishes that M. Zimbrakakis, the Minister for War, should retire from the Cabinet.

I reported to your Lordship in my above-mentioned despatch that M. Tricoupi had hitherto expressed himself to me as desirous that Greece should observe her engagements with regard to Turkey, but he appears to have been completely gained over to M. Coumoundouros' policy, which seems now to be to endeavour to excite revolution in the neighbouring provinces of Turkey in hopes that some advantage may accrue therefrom to Greece.

I have for some time thought that M. Tricoupi sided with M. Coumoundouros, and it was with all reserve that I mentioned in my Confidential despatch No. 14 of the 11th instant a report that he was opposed to the recent departure of an insurrectionary band for Thessaly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 198.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 19.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 16, 1878.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 12 and 13 of the 11th instant, and No. 17 of the 15th instant, in which I reported to your Lordship the departure of a band of men for Thessaly, I have the honour to state that since writing those despatches I have been informed that they left the Piræus in a powerful tug-steamer, which had several small boats in tow. This steamer has, I am told, returned to the Piræus, having probably proceeded near enough to the Turkish coast to enable the band to effect a landing in their boats.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 199.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 20. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens January 17, 1878.*

I FIND it exceedingly difficult to arrive at the real truth of what the intentions of the Greek Government are. Yesterday, as I have reported in my despatch No. 18, I was told that the Cabinet was divided. To-day I am told that all the Ministers are agreed upon the necessity of embarking in an adventurous policy, and I hear that the chiefs of two of the principal Committees, one of which is named "the Committee for the national defence," have been informed that they are at liberty to do what they can to revolutionize Thessaly, Epirus, and Crete, that they may count upon the support of the Government, but that

what they do must be done skilfully, and in such a manner as not to compromise the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 200.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, January 13, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that early yesterday morning it began to be reported in Scutari that Antivari had fallen, and that some of the natives of this place, who had gone to assist in the defence of Antivari when it was first threatened by the Montenegrins, had now returned.

Later in the day these rumours assumed greater consistency, and in the afternoon, when I called upon the Commander-in-chief and the Governor-General, their Excellencies informed me that, notwithstanding a suspension of hostilities had been established between the Turkish forces and those of the Russians and their allies since the 8th instant, the town of Antivari had been forced by the Montenegrins to capitulate two days after—that is to say, on the afternoon of the 10th.

I must here explain that the Governor-General, on the morning of the 9th, sent to tell me that an official telegraphic announcement had been received from the Porte that a suspension of arms had been agreed upon with Russia, and that, consequently, all the commanders of the respective belligerent forces had been instructed to observe it.

The Commander-in-chief, Ali Saib Pasha, who was at San Nicolo fortifying the mouth of the Boyana, at once returned to Scutari, and, as no mention was made in the Porte's telegram of Montenegro, he immediately telegraphed to inquire if he was right in inferring that the armistice was to be observed here also.

An affirmative reply was received on the 10th, and arrangements were made for dispatching next morning a flag of truce to the Montenegrin outposts, for the purpose of obtaining an acknowledgment of the cessation of hostilities.

Whilst these measures were being taken the news arrived of the capitulation of Antivari; and the Turkish authorities expressed a hope that I would inform your Lordship and Mr. Layard of the dates of the above occurrences.

To-day I again called upon Ali Saib Pasha to obtain further details, and his Excellency placed in my hands for perusal a letter he had received this morning from M. Macho Verbitza, the Montenegrin Commandant at Antivari.

M. Verbitza announces in his letter, which is dated the 29th December, o.s. (10th January, 1878), that the garrison and inhabitants of Antivari having capitulated that day, His Highness the Prince of Montenegro had consented to allow them to withdraw to the landing-place on the shores of the bay, in order that they might be embarked thence on board some of the vessels of the Turkish blockading squadron, and His Highness had given directions that these vessels should be allowed to approach the Montenegrin coast batteries unmolested, provided they came with the object intended, until sunset of the evening of the 3rd January, o.s. (Tuesday, 15th January).

M. Verbitza continues his letter by requesting that the vessels may be sent with as little delay as possible, and by suggesting that no hostilities should be undertaken on either side until the expiration of the term already mentioned.

Ali Saib Pasha is convinced that this communication has only been addressed to him in order that the Montenegrins may affirm with a semblance of truth that Antivari surrendered before they had received notice of the conclusion of the suspension of arms; and, in his answer to M. Verbitza, his Excellency states curtly that vessels will be sent to withdraw the garrison and inhabitants of Antivari who capitulated during the existence of an armistice.

I suggested to the Pasha that he had fulfilled his duty in communicating the facts to the Porte, and that, in the interests of peace, it would be well for him not to raise independently the question of the validity of the capitulation. His Excellency assured me this was the course he proposed following.

As the Scutarines who have returned from Antivari, and even Ali Saib Pasha, are inclined to let it be believed that the Prince of Montenegro somewhat departed from the terms of the capitulation when he insisted upon the garrison and inhabitants leaving Antivari without their arms, I think it right to report to your Lordship that Ali Saib Pasha has explained to me that he merely complains of Prince Nicholas having, instead of relaxing his conditions at the last moment, made them more severe, for when, some days before, the garrison had been treating its surrender, he offered to allow it the same terms as had been granted to that of Niesics. His Highness now refused to permit a withdrawal with arms, as he considered the defence had been prolonged unnecessarily.

The fall of Antivari was brought about by the exhaustion of all the stores of provisions, but the Commanders of the garrison state that, if they had known that an armistice had already been concluded, they could have held out for about ten days longer by having recourse to the mules and horses in their possession.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 201.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, January 24, 1878.*

IT is reported to me that the Russian advanced guard is beyond Keshan, not more than thirty miles from Gallipoli. Has my telegram of 18th instant on the same subject ever arrived?

No. 202.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 24, 1878.*

A NEW Cabinet has been formed, with M. Coumoundouros as Prime Minister.

Troops, guns, ammunition, and stores continue to be forwarded to the frontiers.

No. 203.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 24, 1878.*

THE Chambers of Deputies are apparently determined to reject fiscal duties on coffee and petroleum arranged with Hungarian and Austrian Governments, whose remaining in office will probably depend on the question. They are negotiating with different clubs preparatory to the final debate on Saturday, and it is generally believed that they will resign if the duties are not accepted by the Chambers.

No. 204.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 79.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1878.*

I APPROVE the instructions addressed by you to Mr. Consul Blunt, as reported in your Excellency's telegram to me of the 18th instant, ordering him to stay at Adrianople if the city were not defended, and there were no fears for his personal safety.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 205.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 80.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1878.*

WITH regard to a suggestion made by Her Majesty's Consul at Bosna-Serai, in his despatch to me No. 2, Political, of the 5th instant, duplicate of which has been sent to

your Excellency, to the effect that Mr. Vice-Consul Cooper should be sent, as soon a the weather is sufficiently open, to the district of Novi-Bazar, I have to instruct you Excellency, if you see no objection, and are of opinion that such a step would be advisable in order to watch the course of events, to obtain from the Porte facilities for Mr. Cooper, and to inform Mr. Freeman accordingly.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 206.

Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 5.)
My Lord, *Copenhagen, January 22, 1878.*

A REPORT has been current for some time past that the Russian Government have entered into negotiations with the other Baltic Powers for the purpose of converting the Baltic, with the concurrence of such Powers, into a *mare clausum*, into which war vessels of Powers not possessing a Baltic seaboard shall not be permitted to enter. The "St. Petersburgh Herald" now states that the rumour is correct. Russia, it says, has in fact suggested such an arrangement to the neighbouring Powers.

This statement is false as far as Denmark is concerned, and Sweden likewise, I believe, but it is thought here to be not at all improbable that such negotiations may be now carried on between the Russian and German Governments preparatory to the proposal for such an arrangement being submitted to the Scandinavian Governments.

It was from foreseeing that such a danger to our interests as this might one day arise, that I addressed your Lordship in my despatch No. 93 of the 28th October, 1874, on the advantages to be gained by all parties in neutralizing the Baltic by friendly means, and under the joint guarantee of the Great European Powers.

I venture now again to call your Lordship's consideration to that despatch in which I fully stated my views on this subject.

At that time the danger I pointed out was likely to arise from rivalry between Russia and Germany, now it may stare us in the face from a friendly agreement between those Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES LENNOX WYKE.

No. 207.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 104.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 24, 1878.*

VICE-CONSUL at Gallipoli reports the arrival of 2,000 men and 26 field-guns this morning. No news of Russian movements.

Captain Fife arrived yesterday.

No. 208.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 107.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 24, 1878.*

REPORT received to-night that Russian advanced guard has appeared at Babaeski, on the road to Constantinople. Telegraphic communication cut off beyond Tchorlu.

No. 209.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 24, 1878.*

A RETIRED British officer writes from Chalcis that all troops lately quartered there have left for Lamia.

No. 210.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 110.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 25, 1878.*

VICE-CONSUL WILTSHIRE telegraphs from Dédéagatch yesterday, 6 P.M., that Russians have cut railway at Parlo Meni, and plundered station at Baba Esmi; communication with Constantinople interrupted.

No. 211.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 25, 1877.*

WHILE with Count Andrassy this morning I saw a telegram from Rome lying on his table reporting that Russian force on its way to Gallipoli carried torpedoes with it.

No. 212.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 57.)
My Lord, *Rome, January 23, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith an article which appeared in last night's "Italie," headed, "Angleterre et Russie," and in which the writer makes an indirect allusion to a letter said to have been written by Mr. Lowe, stating that the possession of Constantinople by Russia would not be injurious to British commercial interests or to our communications with India, and that consequently he should oppose England's going to war to prevent it, a telegraphic report of which letter appeared in the Italian papers yesterday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 212.

Extract from the "Italie" of January 22, 1878.

ANGLETERRE ET RUSSIE.—Les Russes sont entrés à Andrinople depuis deux jours; ils sont maîtres de la Roumélie. Dans quelques jours ils peuvent se trouver, s'ils le veulent, sous les murs de Constantinople, et rien n'indique encore que l'armistice soit près d'être conclu.

Les Russes, en effet, ne montrent pas un empressement bien vif à signer une Convention qui arrêterait leur marche en avant, et il ne faudrait pas trop s'étonner si l'on apprenait tout-à-coup qu'ils préfèrent signer la paix à Constantinople plutôt qu'à Andrinople. Aussi bien, ils agiraient ainsi suivant l'idée qui les a déterminés à entreprendre la guerre actuelle. **Jamais, dans les nombreuses campagnes qu'ils ont faites contre la Turquie, ils ne se sont** trouvés dans une situation aussi exceptionnellement favorable. En 1829, il est vrai, le Général Diebitsch était arrivé lui aussi jusqu'à Andrinople, après avoir battu l'armée de Schoumla, mais il n'avait avec lui que 25,000 hommes, décimés par les maladies, et quand on signa la paix, sa situation était, peut-être, plus périlleuse que celle des vainqueurs.

Aujourd'hui, au contraire, l'armée Russe a réparé ses pertes, elle est nombreuse, aguerrie, et soutenue par la force morale que donne la certitude de la victoire.

Si donc les Généraux Russes voulaient marcher sur Constantinople, on ne voit pas trop quelles seraient les difficultés contre lesquelles ils se heurteraient.

Constantinople elle-même ne pourrait probablement pas être plus défendue qu'Andrinople. Tout porte à croire que si l'armée du Czar prononce un mouvement en avant, la capitale sera abandonnée, et les manœuvres qu'exécutent déjà Mehemet Ali Pacha et Suleyman Pacha semblent de nature à nous confirmer dans cette opinion.

Cependant, l'Angleterre, dont la conduite a été si déplorable dans toute cette affaire, **après avoir poussé la Turquie à la guerre, fait mine de vouloir l'abandonner plus que jamais.**

A mesure que les Russes avancent, les intérêts Anglais reculent. Et le télégraphe

nous annonce qu'on commence à trouver maintenant à Londres qu'après tout l'occupation de Constantinople même n'est pas faite pour menacer le commerce Anglais.

Très-probablement, s'il prend fantaisie aux Russes de s'emparer du Canal de Suez, on finira par remarquer à Londres qu'à la rigueur, du moment où les Russes ne sèment pas des torpilles dans le Canal, il n'y a pas lieu de s'alarmer.

Les Turcs doivent aujourd'hui regretter amèrement d'avoir prêté la voix aux suggestions de l'Angleterre, et de ne s'être pas souvenus des enseignements de l'histoire qui, cependant, montrent suffisamment quel fond on peut faire sur ce pays jadis si redouté, et dont la puissance depuis vingt ans se montre si fort ébranlée.

Au fond, nous qui n'avons qu'un désir—voir cesser la guerre, nous devons presque nous féliciter de la tournure qu'ont prise les événements.

L'écrasement complet des Turcs aura, peut-être, des conséquences douloureuses pour toute l'Europe; mais puisque cette suppression d'un Empire comme jadis celle de la Pologne menace de s'accomplir au milieu de l'indifférence générale, nous qui n'avons, en définitive, que des intérêts secondaires dans la question, nous n'avons qu'à faire des vœux pour une prompte solution.

Cependant, nous croyons que l'éventualité du voisinage des Russes dans la Méditerrannée n'est pas faite pour laisser indifférentes les Puissances que la présence des Turcs n'avait jamais inquiétées.

No. 213.

Acting Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Smyrna, January 25, 1878.*

ADMIRALTY telegram received yesterday morning by Admiral Hornby. Fleet under way in the afternoon; seen off Mytilene midnight.

No. 214.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 25, 1878.*

OFFICIAL telegram of Grand Duke Nicholas, dated Kyzanlik, January 23rd, stated that General Skoboleff, having reached Adrianople on the 22nd, ordered cavalry to advance on Kirkillissa and Lulibourgas towards Constantinople; cavalry of Guard to march on Demetoka towards Gallipoli.

No. 215.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January 25, 1878.*

THE Prime Minister declared yesterday in the Chamber of Deputies that his policy is "active and effective protection and defence of Hellenism and of our oppressed and prostrate brothers." The Government have, I am informed, laid a Bill before the Chamber to authorize them to make requisitions for horses and means of transport for the army.

Turkish Minister fears hostilities may commence in a few days. Am I authorized by Her Majesty's Government to hold stronger language than I have hitherto held, with a view of endeavouring to prevent an act of aggression on the part of Greece?

No. 216.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 25, 1878.*

I HAVE reason to believe that the Ministry resigned to-day, but it is believed by well-informed persons that difficulty of replacing them their resignation will not be

accepted, and Governments of Austria and Hungary will find it necessary to effect a new arrangement respecting duties on petroleum and coffee.

This question will in no way affect Count Andrassy's position.

No. 217.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 117.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 26, 1878.*

ACCORDING to Captain Fife, who is at Gallipoli, Turks have now 6,000 good troops in the Peninsula, exclusive of the garrisons of the forts along the Straits.

No. 218.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 119.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 26, 1878.*

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs from Gallipoli to-day:—

"No news of Suleiman Pasha. He may have been pursued to Kara Gaz, and prevented from embarking. His arrival here cannot be reckoned on. Great part of his army apparently disbanded near Philippopolis and Tatar-Bazardjik. Six thousand good Turkish troops here can defend lines against attack by light troops if placed in three principal works, and have sufficient cannon for this. Advanced works are opened works, badly placed, and not yet armed. One contingent at cemetery (*sic*)."

No. 219.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 102.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 26, 1878.*

I HAVE to request your Excellency to inform me whether it is intended that the proposed Bulgarian Principality shall include within its limits Salonica or Cavalla, or any portion of the seaboard of the Ægean.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 220.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 121.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 26, 1878.*

MEHMED ALI PASHA with about 11,000 men was at Erekli (?) station, 27 miles from Buyuk-Chekmedje, this morning. Russian cavalry skirmished to-day with Circassians at Seidler Chiflik, 30 miles north of Chorlu. There are at present 9,000 men at Buyuk-Chekmedje. Suleiman Pasha's army (?) from Varna daily expected there.

No. 221.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, January 12, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a translation of a Petition addressed to the Consuls of the Great Powers and of Greece residing in Canea, by the Committee and Delegates of the Cretan Christians, who are collectively styled in the document "Members of the General Assembly of the Cretans," and who, as I stated in my last despatch, employ as an official seal the words "Genikē tōn Kretōn Suneleusis."

In this Petition a protest is directed against the Ottoman Government and its agents for having allowed, and, as alleged, encouraged, the entry into the garrison towns of their Mussulman fellow-islanders, the result of which has been to intensify their hatred against the Christians, and, hence to expose to serious danger the lives, property, and honour of the Christian dwellers in the towns. They disclaim all responsibility for this migration, as they have not ceased, since they formed themselves into a body, to respect the lives and property of the Mussulmans. They conclude by begging the Consuls to call the attention of their respective Governments to this state of things, and to solicit their philanthropic help.

I understand by the expression "philanthropic help" a request that the Powers would send some ships of war to protect the Christians. Such, indeed, is the request put forward by the Christian inhabitants of Candia to the Vice-Consuls there, who go so far as to beg that ships of war may be allowed, as in the last insurrection, to convey them to a place of safety. As I have on previous occasions had the honour of stating, the Vali of Crete has forbidden any one to leave the island, and there are hundreds of Christians forcibly detained here, where they are starving from want of work, in consequence of this unfeeling order. I know of no other part of the Empire where the inhabitants, thinking their lives in danger, are not at liberty to run away. In an interview which I had with the Vali to-day, I asked his Excellency if the prohibition was still in force, and I found that he was not inclined to relax its operation. Costaki Pasha agrees with me that it is as unnecessary as it is cruel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 221.

Petition.

(Traduction.)

A MM. les Consuls d'Angleterre, de France, d'Italie, d'Autriche-Hongrie, d'Allemagne, et de Grèce.

M. le Consul,

VOICI cinq mois environ que le peuple Crétois, dans le but de soutenir les modifications au Règlement Organique proposées dans les deux dernières Assemblées Générales, tenues à la Canée, a eu recours à une démonstration pacifique. Ces modifications, qui ont pour bases l'égalité et le *self-government*, visent utiles à tous les éléments de la population du pays, conformément au principe de ce siècle de progrès.

Le Gouvernement Ottoman a, par malheur, méconnu ces dispositions pacifiques du peuple Crétois, qui ont été portées à sa connaissance, ainsi qu'à celle des Gouvernements Européens, par la publication faite à Clima par l'Assemblée. Il a par suite autorisé et même favorisé l'entrée dans ses forteresses de nos compatriotes Musulmans, excitant ainsi ceux-ci à la haine envers les Chrétiens, malgré nos assurances répétées que les Chrétiens, par les modifications demandées, recherchaient à vivre en harmonie et dans une fraternelle amitié avec les Musulmans, en jouissant avec eux des bienfaits d'une paix longue et durable.

Les conséquences de cette conduite étaient, M. le Consul, faciles à prévoir. L'entrée dans les forteresses des Musulmans, très supérieurs en nombre et excités ainsi contre nous, malgré nos assurances pacifiques, devait constituer menace pressante pour la vie, l'honneur et les biens de nos coreligionnaires des villes et de leurs environs.

C'est ainsi qu'il y a trois jours, à Rethymo, les Musulmans ont fermé les portes de cette ville, et en ont menacé non seulement les habitants Chrétiens mais aussi M. T. Trifilli et son drogman, M. Em. Papadaki, qui avaient voulu s'interposer en faveur des Chrétiens, et qui ont été obligés de chercher leur salut dans une prompte retraite.

C'est à bon droit que cette conduite de nos compatriotes Musulmans nous a causé, à nous, seuls légaux représentants du peuple Crétois à l'Assemblée Générale des Crétois, légalement constitué, de craintes justifiées pour la sécurité dans l'avenir de nos frères Chrétiens des villes et de leurs environs.

Nous avons par suite le devoir de protester contre le Gouvernement Ottoman et ses agents, seule cause de cette situation, et réclamer pour la vie, l'honneur et les biens de nos frères Chrétiens des villes et de leurs environs, qui sont actuellement en danger, le secours philanthropique des Grandes Puissances Européennes.

Dans l'espoir que vous voudrez bien appeler la bienveillante attention du Gouverne-

ment que vous représentez dignement sur ces faits, pour obtenir ce que l'humanité exige, nous avons, &c.

L'Assemblée Générale des Crétois,
(L.S.) Les Membres.
[Suivent les signatures.]
Le Président,
(L.S.) G. PAPPAMARCACHI.
Le Vice-Président,
J. G. PAPPADAKI.
Le Secrétaire,
G. BLUSSIADIS.

Appocorona, le 22 Décembre (v. s.), 1877.

No. 222.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 4. Political.)

Canea, Crete, January 13, 1878.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 2 of the 7th instant I had the honour to inform your Lordship that, in consequence of the disturbed state of the town of Candia, Samih Pasha had gone thither himself. I take the liberty of inclosing copy of a despatch written by the Vice-Consul there, describing the influx of Mussulman fugitives into that town and the efforts of the authorities to prevent it. The Christian inhabitants were in a state of terror, and Mr. Calocherino begs that a small vessel of war might visit that port in order to reassure them. I was glad to learn yesterday from Samih Pasha that the authorities have succeeded in stemming the torrent of Moslem fugitives, and I would fain hope that the excitement is subsiding. There are now few Mussulmans remaining in the open country from the western coasts of Crete as far as Candia, which embraces quite half the island, and the consequences of this displacement of the population are visible in the immense amount of misery inflicted on both religious sections of the community. The Mussulmans being without employment, and the great majority in absolute want, commit depredations on the Christians, who unable, by reason of the Vali's orders, to leave the island, are gradually withdrawing to the hills. I have been urging the Vali to disarm the Mussulman immigrants, a measure which his Excellency has agreed to adopt, and I shall be glad to be able to report that it has been carried out. His Excellency told me that he had received a report from the Kaïmakam of Selina stating that the Zaptiehs of that sub-district, in company with a few needy Moslems who have remained behind, are pillaging the deserted houses of the fugitives, but that the Christians had abstained from committing any damage whatever. This statement confirms what I had the honour to report last week, and shows that the assertion of the Committee in Apokorona, in their Petition inclosed in my previous despatch, that the Christians had refrained from offering any violence to the Mussulmans, was no idle boast.

The authorities having withdrawn their police from most of the villages of this half of Crete, and the Courts of Law having practically ceased to work except in the chief towns, where they discharge their duties in a perfunctory manner, the Government may be said to have partly abdicated its functions. Such order as exists is due to the force of habit, supplemented by a police force supported by the people, independent of the legitimate authorities, but there is a growing excitement observable owing to the landing of several Chiefs from Greece. The most noted of these is Kriari, who came a week ago with a good stock of rifles and gunpowder, having in his company the priest Parthenios, who was Secretary to the Committee in the last insurrection. Several Chiefs of minor importance have also made their appearance, and there is now no lack of arms, but the want of food must soon be severely felt. The authorities can no longer disguise the fact that the island is in a state of rebellion, though no hostile act involving bloodshed has been committed, for the Committee is anxious to avoid the odium of being the aggressors until they have exhausted all pacific means of obtaining what they consider to be their rights. This matter remains to be decided between them and the Ottoman Commissioners, concerning whose proceedings I shall have the honour to report in my next despatch.

My French colleague, seeing the disorder reigning around, has thought it prudent to lodge on his premises a party of six sailors belonging to a French corvette stationed in

Suda Bay. This measure is naturally viewed with great dissatisfaction by the local authorities, who have since posted a guard of [regular troops hard by, as if by way of protest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 222.

Vice-Consul Calocherino to Consul Sandwith.

Sir, *Candia, Crete, January 8, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to state that the Turks of the villages, and especially of Messara, pretending that they are not in security in their homes on account of some robberies of animals which have taken place there, brought all their movables into this town, and now they enter armed with their families, though the Christian inhabitants of this district have not shown any insurrectionary sign.

The Governor-General arrived here on the 3rd instant, and sent the Mutessarif to the villages in order to stop the movements of the Turkish families, and the Vali himself, at the gates of the fortress, tried to turn them back; nevertheless they insist, and they enter, as they have done even to-day, by force.

The Christian inhabitants of this town and environs are afraid of this accumulation of the Turks in town, as the latter, having no work here, will of course commit all kinds of abuses, and especially now that the Government is so weak, and asked the Governor-General either to send the Turkish families to their villages or to give permission to the Christians to leave the island. The Pasha promised that as soon as he returns to Canea he will decide upon their demand.

I inclose herewith three Petitions of the inhabitants of this town, of Malevision, and of Messara, on this matter.

At the same time, I beg to submit to you, Sir, if you think it proper, to ask that a British gun-boat be sent to remain for some days in this port, in order to repress the fanaticism of the Turks, because nobody can predict the end of this affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. A. CALOCHERINO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 222.

Telegram, dated January 9, 1877.

TURKISH families of the villages continue to enter the fortress, though the Christians declare that they accept the proposals of the Government and remain quiet. In five days all the Turkish families will be in this town, when there will be great danger that atrocities will be committed in town and the environs by Turks. Government cannot stop families but by force, which they decline to employ. Vali sent two days ago the Mutessarifs to the villages to stop families by fair means; nevertheless, Turkish families continue to arrive here; by force only they will stop them. I learn Vali leaves this town in desperate condition.

No. 223.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, January 14, 1878.*

IN my despatch No. 1 of the 6th instant I had the honour to inform your Lordship that it was the intention of Costaki Pasha and his colleague to issue a Proclamation at once, and then to return to Apokorona.

I went to see Costaki Pasha on the 8th instant, when his Excellency told me, with much concern, that in consequence of an imprudent step taken by the Vali at Candia, he had delayed publishing the intended Proclamation, and that he would await his Excellency's return to Canea. It appears that the Vali had, while in Candia, without consulting the Commissioners, already given orders for the election of the Deputies for a new General

Assembly, and that the elections had already begun in that town and the surrounding districts. It had entered into the plans of the Commissioners to convoke the General Assembly at an early date, but not until they had come to a previous understanding with the Committee, without whose concurrence it is certain that the election of the Deputies in this part of the island could not be carried out. In a subsequent interview with Costaki Pasha his Excellency told me that he had abandoned the idea of proclaiming the object of his mission, and that he would set out without delay for Vamos, the Government head-quarters in Apokorona, and from thence proceed with his colleague, Salim Effendi, to the village where the Committee is sitting. His Excellency begged me, however, in order, as he said, "to save appearances," to write to the Committee, suggesting that three or four of their number should go to Vamos to invite the Commissioners to visit the Committee, and to escort them on the way. Although my former letter inviting some of the Delegates to come to Canea had not attained its object, I knew they could have no difficulty in complying with this fresh request, so I dispatched the desired letter yesterday, and the two Commissioners set out for Apokorona in the afternoon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—January 16. Costaki Pasha and his colleague returned from Opokorona last night. Arrived at Vamos, they were met, as I had requested, by ten or twelve of the more respectable Delegates, who escorted them to Frè. There they were received with all the honours due to their rank; and, in few words, Costaki Pasha and Salem Effendi told them the object of their mission. After some conversation on the subject of the Cretan demands, it was thought advisable to wait until all the districts had elected their Delegates, which it will take another week or ten days to accomplish. During this interval the Commissioners, who have just communicated to me this intelligence, will remain here.

T. B. S.

No. 224.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, January 16, 1878.*

IN consequence of a delay in the arrival of the weekly steamer from Syra, I am able to add that I have seen the Commander of the French gun-vessel stationed in Suda Bay, who has just returned from a visit to Candia. He reports that that town is quiet again, and that, in his opinion, there was not at any moment any real cause for the alarm which I had the honour of reporting in my despatch No. 4 of the 13th instant. The Mussulman peasantry had fled from the Christians, and the mutual fear which they seem to have inspired had in neither case any foundation, but is easily accounted for by the reminiscences left by the last insurrection and the more recent stories of massacres in European Turkey.

I am also glad to be able to state that a greater feeling of security prevails here. The Vali has begun disarming the Mussulmans, and strong patrols of gendarmes and soldiers occupy the roads, these vigorous measures having had a most salutary effect in inspiring confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 225.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 7. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, January 9, 1878.*

I HEAR from a very reliable source that a deserter, arrived lately at Erzeroum, has brought the news that the Mussulmans of Kars had revolted.

The details given are that since the occupation of the town by the Russians, the Armenians became so overbearing to the Turks, and the Russians paid so little attention to the complaints of the latter, that they took up arms, and that the garrison of Kars,

being too weak to subdue them, Loris Melikoff had proceeded in person with a number of troops to put down the revolt.

However, it is difficult to believe that the Russian Commander-in-chief should have not provided Kars with a sufficient number of troops to keep the Mussulmans in obedience, the more so that the male population capable of resistance cannot be more than between 1,500 and 2,000, who must, of course, have been deprived of their arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 226.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 28.)

(No. 8. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, January* 9, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Mussulman deputies elected at Erzeroum have resigned, and that it is not expected that they will be replaced by others. The Christian (Armenian) deputies of that town have arrived lately, and depart by first steamer for Constantinople.

The information which I have been able to gather from the latter as to the situation at Erzeroum is that the troops are greatly demoralized, especially so since Moukhtar Pasha's departure, and that good winter clothing has been issued to part of them only a short time ago.

Lately large quantities of clothing, shoes, &c., which were stored here since some time, have been, and are being, sent to Erzeroum.

The deputies assure me that there are now stored for the use of the army 160,000 kilog. (bushels) of wheat, which are reckoned to be sufficient for six months' consumption. The population is not so well off; a few of the inhabitants have provisions for a whole year, but some of them are even now entirely destitute; however, on the whole, they reckon that the stores in the town are sufficient for the subsistence of the population during three months.

All the Turkish troops are quartered in the forts outside the town; the last rations issued before their departure were 28,000; the number of sick and wounded in the hospitals they reckon to amount to 7,000; that of admittances to 1,000 a week; and that of deaths to about 500.

They believe in Erzeroum that the number of the Russians is 80 battalions and 14,000 cavalry on that side of the Deve Boyoun, and 34 battalions and 6,000 horses on the side of the Gingi Beghaz.

The French courier from Persia, who arrived here four days ago, reports that he met very few Russians between Bayazid and Deve Boyoun, at which last place there are only outposts, but that all the villages in the Passim plain are full of Russian soldiers. He did not meet a single one on this side of Erzeroum.

The snow was so deep that three hours were employed by the courier to cross the Deve Boyoun, a passage he usually performed in half an hour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 227.

Consul R. Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 28.)

(No. 1. Political.)
My Lord, *Varna, January* 14, 1878.

HAVING just returned from Rustchuk, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith inclosed copy of my report thereon to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure in No. 227.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Varna, January* 12, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have just returned from another visit to Rustchuk, where, from what I had heard of the condition of the Christians there, I considered it advisable to go.

I found the population in general suffering chiefly from want of fuel, it being already excessively cold; and this was attributable to the villagers, who bring the wood for sale, being afraid of the forced labour system, which I found in full force. I spoke unofficially to the authorities concerned, and, was glad to see, with some effect.

I also heard of many other complaints, which convinced me that the population is neglected—indeed, I was hardly surprised, for how can it be expected that the Governor-General and, who is also military Commandant of the place, Ahmed Kaiserly Pasha, a man of about 75 years of age, with no civil assistant, can give his attention to both military and civil affairs of the place at such a critical moment, and which his three predecessors, with only the civil powers, told me taxed them to the utmost. If ever a civil assistant was required, it is certainly so at Rustchuk at the present moment. All this is now left to a Kurdish officer (the Chief of Police), of whom I heard numerous, and I believe well-grounded, complaints.

I must here add that my inquiries were not confined to Bulgarian and other Christians; I also spoke to Mussulmans, and, when all say the same thing, you are pretty sure to get at the truth. I spoke, moreover, to a person who has hitherto always supported the authorities through thick and thin, and I was amazed to perceive how he was changed, and this more than all convinced me of the truth of what I had heard.

What I heard, however, of the condition of the Bulgarians and Mussulmans within the Russian lines and from Bulgarians was still worse. These stories were very shocking; but as I am unable to produce proof of their correctness, I could not give them in detail even had I not given my word of honour to my informants that I would not name them.

I am as convinced of the truth of the assertion which has so often been made that the present is a most hideous war as regards only what the poor guiltless part of the population are suffering as I am of my own existence.

In the district from Shumla to Rustchuk, and from Osman Bazar to Silistria, there are nearly 200,000 innocent refugees, many of whom are in a frightful condition, and what the number must be in that part of the vilayet on the other side of the Russian line I cannot say, but I have heard that it is as great, and that their sufferings also are dreadful.

It has been said on the Russian side that the Bashi-Bazouks kill and mutilate their wounded enemies. Having heard that these men were to muster in great force at Suleiman Pasha's attack on Metchka on the 12th ultimo, I determined to be present myself, and in such a way as not to create their suspicions. A Bashi-Bazouk, it must be remembered, is not any particular race, as that of the Zeibeks, Circassians, or Kurds, &c. Every Mussulman, not a soldier, from the Grand Vizier downwards, is a Bashi-Bazouk, that is, one bound to take part in the defence of his country if necessary; and when Bashi-Bazouks go out during war, their object is to support the military to the utmost of their power. I am not ashamed to say that I am acquainted with many very respectable, and, I will add, humane Bashi-Bazouks; but there are black sheep in every flock. Everyone in Turkey knows that the Christians and Bashi-Bazouks, when left alone, get on very well together in general. It is also as well known that the Bashi-Bazouks have suffered from the vicious government of the country quite as much as the Christians, would, beyond all doubt, have joined them long ago in opposing this bad Government if means had not been taken from abroad to set the latter against them.

As regards the Russian wounded having been ill-treated by Bashi-Bazouks, I will now give the result of my very dilligent inquiries on the subject. I was assured that the Bashi-Bazouks who had committed any of these excesses were those from the towns and villages in the occupation of the Russians, whose wives and children had been massacred, whose houses had been burnt, and who, having escaped, followed the armies to take their revenge. The thing, it must be admitted, is shocking, but at any rate it is not without some explanation. Respectable Bashi-Bazouks have told me themselves that it is very bad, but very difficult to prevent.

When at Rustchuk I was told confidentially by a friend of theirs that the Bulgarians within the Russian lines were so cruelly taxed and, when they could not pay up, ill-treated, that they did not escape to the Turks for fear of being molested. On my arrival at

Rasgrad I saw General Fuzli Pasha, acting as Commander-in-chief for Suleiman Pasha, who had been called to Constantinople, and told him this. He thanked me, and immediately telegraphed strict orders to all the Generals under him from the Balkans to the Danube to take care that no Bulgarian coming from the enemy was interfered with in any way; and that, if any came and were disposed to return to tell their fellow-countrymen that they had nothing to fear, they were to be assisted, if necessary.

With regard to the Circassians, the real scourge of this unfortunate population, who, notwithstanding all their fearful sufferings, never cease to prowl about the country to rob and plunder them.

Hearing a Turkish officer speaking very strongly against them, I asked how it was that they tolerated these ruffians. He replied that, if I promised not to name him he would illustrate to me why. I, of course, complied with his request, when he said that some two months ago a Turkish officer with some cavalry were detached on a certain service. On their way they heard shrieks some distance to their right. The officer ordered his sergeant to go quickly and see what it was. In about twenty minutes he returned, and said that he found a poor Mussulman refugee family, composed of an elderly man and woman and several children, all of whom were holding on to a donkey of theirs whilst a Circassian was endeavouring to get it away from them. The woman shrieked, "If you take this we shall die here, as we cannot go on." The sergeant ordered the fellow to desist, when he drew a revolver and pointed it at him. The former fearing the refugees might suffer galloped back after his party, who at once turned round and went up to the refugees. The Circassian and the donkey having disappeared, the officer asked the woman in which direction, when some of them galloped off and soon returned with both. The donkey was given back to its owner, and the Circassian was laid down and most severely bastinadoed, then ordered to go off quickly. The detachment afterwards passed the village to which the Circassian had gone, and plainly saw the effect of the just punishment he had received.

About a month afterwards a peremptory order came from Constantinople to find out and punish those that had ill-treated the Circassian. The party could not be identified, and the officer actually learned that the order for their punishment had been sent at the instance of Circassian ladies at Constantinople. And this, my informant assured me, is constantly done; indeed, he added, that they know what ruffians these Circassians are, and what mischief they do to the regular troops, but fear of the ladies at Constantinople prevents them putting down what would require very little time and trouble to do, and he also added that this was the secret of the whole Circassian question.

During my stay at Rustchuk some military hospitals near the Consulate were constantly fired at from across the Danube. I myself saw some sick soldiers who had been wounded by a shell which I saw fired into the hospital.

Being doubtful whether, according to the Geneva Convention, the Turks had a right to establish these hospitals in a bombarded town, I spoke to General Fazli Pasha at Rasgrad on the subject. He said that it was irregular, and that he should go up to Rustchuk in a few days, and have the patients removed to a farm, which would make a good hospital about an hour's distance from the town, and close to the railway line.

The weather was very severe at Rustchuk, and it continues so to this moment. Some ice is floating down the Danube, but it has not as yet frozen over. Directly I hear of a material change, I shall not fail to telegraph to the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 228.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 2. Political.)
My Lord, *Salonica, January 16, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, herewith inclosed, a copy of my despatch of the 14th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting the movement of troops in Thessaly, the active military preparations at Larissa, and the arrival of refugees from the Servian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 228.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Salonica, January 14, 1878.

Sir,

ALL the posts from Thessaly and Epirus have been detained by the bad weather, and I have been prevented from reporting to your Excellency the progress of events during the last few days. I have now the honour to inform you that Mr. Suter reports on January 8 much activity in military preparations at Larissa; the troops are subjected to constant drill, fatigue parties are working at the earthworks, and a battery of six Krupp guns, just received from Constantinople, are being made ready for immediate service.

At the same time Mr. Suter says the news from Greece does not seem to warrant such preparations.

The "Ghegha" irregulars continue to desert. A few days before the date of his despatch 1-80 of these went away in a body, carrying away with them the arms and ammunition issued to them by the Government.

Mr. Longworth had left Larissa on the 5th for Ambelakia, Ayah and Volo.

Mr. Kypriotis on December 30 reports the arrival at Janina of 1,500 irregular Albanian troops from Vahma and Argyro-Castro, and their departure again for Arta.

Here the weather having cleared up all the troops have left by rail for Mitrovitza, and his Excellency the Vali has telegraphed for more.

Numbers of refugees are coming in from the environs of the frontier threatened by the war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

No. 229.

Consul T. S. Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 1. Political. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Smyrna, January 18, 1878.*

A MEMORIAL addressed to Lord Beaconsfield by gentlemen representing the British community of Smyrna, for the purpose of submitting their views with regard to the social and political state of this country, and more especially of correcting—so far as the circumstances of long residence in Turkey and intimate relations with the Ottoman natives may be supposed to give weight to their testimony—impressions prevalent in England which they regard as erroneous respecting the real character of the Turkish people and Government, has been prepared for immediate transmission by post.

Having been favoured with a copy of that document, I have the honour to inclose it herewith for your Lordship's consideration.

Although, my Lord, it is scarcely necessary, I should add that with the preparation of this Memorial I have myself had nothing whatever to do, I feel I might be doing wrong to my own sentiments were I to omit stating that the observations expressed in that paper, in so far as they are applicable to the general state of this Consular district, coincide very closely with those I have been able myself personally to form.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. READE.

Inclosure in No. 229.

British Residents in Smyrna to the Earl of Beaconsfield.

Smyrna, January 17, 1878.

My Lord,

IN the serious crisis through which Turkey is now passing, we, the undersigned members of the British community of Smyrna, long resident in this country, and in whose future we are deeply interested, most respectfully take the liberty of addressing to your Lordship a few brief observations based on personal experience and practical appreciation.

Our remarks have special reference to Anatolia, with which important portion of Asiatic Turkey we are intimately acquainted.

There seems to be a very general impression in England that the Turks are a savage and cruel race, prone to every species of barbarity. This we emphatically deny. They are, as a people, if not roused to religious frenzy, kind-hearted, hospitable, and generous, and although the savage deeds of the wild rabble known under the general name of "Bashi-Bazouks" cannot be too severely stigmatized, these are the acts of the scum and outcasts of the country, who form only a small fractional part of the population.

The prevalent impression, likewise, that the Christian subjects of the Porte are more oppressed and ill-treated than Mussulmans is altogether a misconception of the true state of the case, for we do not hesitate to assert that not only are the Christian Rayahs in Anatolia not specially ill-treated, but that, as a general rule, they are better protected against oppression than the poor Mussulman peasant, whilst, at the same time, the Rayah enjoys the highly valued privileges of immunity from conscription and tolerance in matters of religion.

As regards, however, the administration of public affairs in Turkey, it would be impossible for us to speak in terms too disparaging; and we entertain but little hope of any serious results from the Constitution recently promulgated unless the powerful influence of England is so brought to bear on the Ottoman Government as to insure the execution of the reforms which are so indispensable for the future welfare of the country.

We do not presume to suggest to Her Majesty's Government the political line of conduct which they should adopt in the present grave conjuncture, having implicit confidence that in your Lordship we have a zealous defender of Treaties which have been obtained by vast sacrifices, and, at the same time, a staunch upholder of the honour and interests of Great Britain.

With, &c.

(Here come the signatures of a considerable number of the principal British residents, headed by Mr. J. B. Patterson.)

No. 230.

Vice-Consul Bonham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 3. Political.)

My Lord, *Jassy, January* 21, 1878.

I REGRET to have to report to your Lordship that typhus fever exists amongst the Turkish prisoners who pass through this, and men suffering from it have been taken to the hospitals in the town, where also some of the nurses have been seized with the disease; the prisoners continue to pass daily, as they have done since the 7th instant, but now sentries being placed round the trains, they are not allowed to move about, nor are the public allowed near them as was formerly the case.

The condition of the prisoners is deplorable, and I consider it my duty to report it to your Lordship, and to mention the following facts:—

I have heard from a perfectly reliable source that a train of prisoners arrived on the 14th instant at a station some distance from this, in the evening, when leave was requested that it might be detained as the prisoners had not had food since leaving Bucharest, and must suffer fearfully if obliged to remain longer without it; the train was, however, sent on here, where food was given them; but it would appear incontestable that on the morning of the 15th the corpses of upwards of thirty Turks were taken from the train. There is no doubt that every day in the trains of prisoners some Turks are found dead; reports on the subject are very numerous, and, of course, become exaggerated; however, from ten to twenty is, I am assured, about the number of the bodies removed from the trains daily; three days ago I myself happened to look into a truck of a train which had just been emptied and saw five bodies lying in a heap.

When taken to hospital I believe they are well treated, indeed I have seen Turkish officers most kindly tended in the Russian hospitals, but it is to be regretted that the men in charge of the prisoners do not treat them with more humanity. I have seen them treated very harshly; many stories are related on the subject, but I have heard from an eye-witness that the other evening, as the prisoners were being removed from the Roumanian to the Russian trucks, one prisoner fell down and was left lying near the line as dead, when about two hours afterwards a gentleman hearing of it went to the spot, found he was not dead, applied to the police and got him carried into the waiting-room, where, on tea being given him, he recovered.

The mortality amongst the prisoners must be great, and they suffer considerably from the weather, being insufficiently clothed and provided for.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. W. BONHAM.

No. 231.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 78. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 18, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of the telegram addressed by the Sultan to the Emperor of Russia with reference to an armistice and negotiations for peace, and of His Imperial Majesty's reply.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 231.

His Majesty the Sultan to the Emperor of Russia.

Le 13 Janvier, 1878.

(Télégraphique.)

EN déplorant les circonstances qu'a amenées cette guerre désolante entre les deux Empires appelés à vivre toujours en bonne harmonie, et désirant ardemment voir cesser un moment plus tôt une effusion de sang inutile qui répugne également au cœur compatissant et aux sentiments d'humanité bien connus de votre Majesté Impériale, je viens de nommer, conformément à l'entente établie entre mon Gouvernement et Son Altesse Impériale le Grand Duc Nicholas, Server Pacha, mon Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, et Namik Pacha, en qualité de Plénipotentiaires chargés d'arrêter avec Son Altesse Impériale le Grand Duc les bases de la paix et les principes de l'armistice. Les Plénipotentiaires partiront après-demain Mardi, 15 Janvier, pour Kyzanlik. J'espère que votre Majesté Impériale voudra bien, en attendant la conclusion de ces négociations, donner les ordres nécessaires pour la cessation des hostilités sur tout le théâtre de la guerre.

Inclosure 2 in No. 231.

The Emperor of Russia to His Majesty the Sultan.

Le 15 Janvier, 1878.

(Télégraphique.)

COMME votre Majesté je désire la paix et ce rétablissement de bonnes relations, mais je ne saurais consentir à une suspension d'hostilités que si la Porte accepte préalablement les conditions auxquelles les Commandants-en-chef, d'après les ordres dont ils sont munis, doivent subordonner la conclusion d'un armistice.

No. 232.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 79.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 18, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copies of two reports which I have received from Commander Hamond, of Her Majesty's ship "Torch," giving a very distressing account of matters at Bourgas. In consequence of the large number of fugitives, both Mussulmans and Christians, who crowd on board his ship, which is far too small to accommodate even the half of their number, he has taken upon himself to charter a steam-tug to convey 250 of these persons to Constantinople, and has made himself responsible for the expense of their passage.

I have informed him that I would forward his report to your Lordship, and recommend to your favourable consideration the request it contains.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 232.

Commander Hamond to Mr. Layard.

"*Torch*," *Bourghas, January* 13, 1878.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that I have this day dispatched the following telegram to British Embassy at Constantinople:—

"Stringent orders from the Porte to leave man-of-war to keep order by patrols until Russians are close to town urgently required."

In consequence of a letter received last evening from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bourghas, I this morning weighed and anchored off the town. I found that 8,000 fugitives from the surrounding districts had arrived and many others were pouring in.

The force of zaptiehs being utterly inadequate for the maintenance of order, Mr. Brophy suggested to the Turkish authorities the advisability of landing patrols from one of the Turkish men-of-war. This was done. There are two Turkish war vessels lying here—a frigate "Selimié," a corvette "Edirné."

Accompanied by the English Vice-Consul, I visited the Kaïmakam and also the Senior Naval Officer, and urged strongly upon the latter the absolute necessity of one man-of-war remaining for the purpose of keeping men patrolling the town to prevent disorders, plundering, &c. The Captain of the "Selimié" assured me that he would do so, and not leave until the Russians were in sight. I dispatched the above telegram to you before the interview, and even now think it very doubtful if the ship will remain without further orders from head-quarters.

The Vice-Consul informs me that the towns of Aidos and Karnabad have been plundered, and, it is reported, burnt, by the Turkish inhabitants before leaving; also that various villages in this district have been plundered by Circassians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RICH. H. HAMOND.

Inclosure 2 in No. 232.

Commander Hamond to Mr. Layard.

"*Torch*," *Bourghas, January* 16, 1878.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour forward to your Excellency a report relative to affairs at Bourghas.

Since the 13th, thousands of fugitives, Moslems and Christians, have been pouring into the place. The towns of Aidos and Karnabad have been burnt by order of the Turkish authorities on Turkish inhabitants leaving. I have been told that many Bulgarians have been killed at Karnabad.

The Ottomans here have only taken on board Moslem fugitives. This town is emptied of its inhabitants, they and their goods remaining on the beach. As far as can be ascertained, the town is to be burnt on the departure of the Turkish authorities, and the wretched people left will be at the mercy of the Circassians.

All the Christian and Jewish fugitives from the interior have been plundered on their way here, and have literally nothing but the clothes they wear.

Yesterday about 400 homeless women and children and some men were brought on board, most of them from the towns of Aidos and Karnabad. I have taken upon myself the responsibility of chartering the British steam-tug "Alexandria," and have transferred over 250 of these people to her for passage to Constantinople.

There will be then on board here, when we get the men belonging to these families, over 200, and I hope that you will be able to send a vessel here for them.

I tried to send a telegram to you to-day, but am afraid it will not be forwarded.

I have received Mr. Brophy on board, and he and I have been acting in conjunction.

For the sake of humanity I hired this tug in the name of the English Government, and hope that what I have done will be approved.

To-day the Kaïmakam has willingly offered to supply me with bread for the fugitives on board.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RICH. H. HAMOND.

P.S.—List of fugitives sent from this ship:—82 men, 100 women, 97 boys and girls, 40 infants, besides two boat-loads from the shore, at the following rate: to men and women, 1*l.* each; boys and girls, 10*s.* each; infants, no charge.

R. H. H.

No. 233.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 28.)

(No. 3. Political. Confidential.)

Corfu, January 24, 1878.

My Lord,

SINCE the date of the despatch which I had the honour of addressing to your Lordship on the 17th instant, No. 2, Political, we have a lull in politics.

1. The reports put in circulation of a split in the Greek Ministry, and the rumours respecting an armistice at the seat of war, have for the moment, very much disconcerted the Anti-Turkish Heteria, but have in no way shaken their determination to persevere in their efforts to create an insurrectionary movement in the neighbouring Epirus.

2. The state of the weather has been unfavourable to communications with the Southern Islands, so that only on the 18th instant I was informed of all the circumstances attendant on the naval movements in the waters of Corigo referred to in my last report.

3. The visit of the Greek gunboat to Cerigo was closely followed by a visit from a Turkish ironclad, which entered and cast anchor in the port of Capsali, naturally to no small consternation of the townspeople, who have the reputation (doubtless well-merited) of being zealous promoters of the Cretan insurrection.

The Eparch and others of the chief authorities hastened on board the ironclad to pay their respects, when the polite manner in which they were received by the Captain soon dispelled their fears of a bombardment.

The Eparch had taken with him as interpreter Dr. Constantine Lazzaretti, a gentleman belonging to one of the principal families in the island, stanch adherents of the British Protectorate, and who, from having practised as a lawyer for several years in the Courts at Constantinople, had acquired a knowledge of Turkish, and also, as is the case with all well-educated Cerigotes, speaks English perfectly.

By-and-bye Dr. Lazzaretti, in the course of conversation, found out that the Captain of the ironclad had received his naval education in England, and that he also speaks English fluently.

This discovery led to a free and unrestrained communication of their mutual ideas respecting the leading topics of the day, in the course of which the Captain frankly avowed that his object in visiting Cerigo was to find out, if possible, what the Greek gunboat was after, and whether there was any depôt of arms or other military stores on the island for the use of the Cretan insurgents. Talking on more general subjects, he emphatically declared that the Turks would fight the Russians as long as they had a single soldier left alive, or a ship afloat. He also hinted in a mysterious way, as a fact well-known to the initiated, that England never would abandon Turkey, and that when the worst came to the worst, it would be found that a secret understanding had been established between England, Italy, France, and Austria, to prevent, by force of arms, the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire.

Such opinions, confidently enunciated, may serve to show on what grounds intelligent and educated Turks build their hopes of a favourable issue to the present struggle.

With, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 234.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 28.)

(No. 4. Political. Confidential.)

Corfu, January 24, 1878.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit copy of a Report received by the mail of the 21st instant from the Vice-Consul at Santa Maura, relative to military movements in that direction.

2. Preparations had been made for embarking for Santa Maura these additional companies from this garrison by the return mail steamer of the 22nd instant, but the expected order from Athens to that effect had not arrived, and the departure of the troops was suspended.

3. The delay in the transmission of the order in question is attributed to the change of Ministry; but the change of men will not, it is supposed, lead to any change in the military policy of the Government, as the 2nd class of the Reserves is being called out and embodied with all possible diligence.

4. In Cephalonia alone, of all the islands, the military measures of the Government are regarded with aversion.

The opinion prevails there that if Greece gets involved in a war with Turkey, it will end in the ruin of the country.

With, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure in No. 234.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Santa Maura, January 19, 1878.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in consequence of a telegraphic order from Athens of the 16th instant, the following military movements have taken place here:—

Infantry.—Captain Sideropoulos' company left on the morning of the 17th for Zaverda.

Captains Kitariolo's and Condorato's companies have left this morning, the former for Asiakos and the latter for Vonitza.

Major Drakos, commanding the Battalion, and Staff, have also left for Vonitza this morning, the command of the garrison having been taken by Captain Hadzijannis.

2. On Thursday morning (17th) a Greek steamboat brought two companies of infantry from Corfu; and two more, making up the battalion, will, I am informed, arrive from that island on Wednesday next. The battery of artillery remains here till further orders, and will be joined in a day or two by another from Missolonghi. This will bring up this garrison to 1 battalion of infantry and 2 batteries of mountain artillery.

3. The Government steam-ship "Amphitrite" arrived at Port Alexander on the morning of the 17th, and landed 12 small Krupp mountain guns, along with a quantity of war material and other military stores from the Pirœus.

4. The conscripts of the Reserve just called out are being recruited, and it is said that all the Reserve contingent of the Ionian Islands will be sent here.

5. Colonel Sapouzaki, commanding the Missolonghi division, is expected here next week.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS ONOFRIO.

No. 235.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

Athens, January 27, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)

A REPORT of peace having been agreed to, which reached Athens yesterday, was a severe blow to the aspirations of the Greeks, and disturbances took place, and some lives are said to have been lost.

No. 236.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

Berlin, January 28, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received following telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Tiflis:—

"Please telegraph to Foreign Office that orders have been sent to attack Erzeroum."

No. 237.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

Constantinople, January 28, 1878.

(No. 128.)
(Telegraphic.)

VICE-CONSUL at Rodosto telegraphs that about 3,000 Russians, infantry and cavalry, with 3 guns, are marching on Tchorlu. Authorities are ordered to leave Tchorlu on their appearance, and transfer vilayet to Gallipoli. Greek Bishop will replace Governor. Information from Keshan reports no movement towards Gallipoli; 10,000 Circassians and over 5,000 Turkish refugees at Rodosto. No transports.

No. 238.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28, 5·45 P.M.)

Paris, January 28, 1878, 3·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received the following telegram from Consul Mark, dated Marseilles, 28th January, 12·30 P.M.:—

"Four frigates have left Toulon for the Levant."

No. 239.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

Paris, January 28, 1878, 5·25 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram of 3·45 P.M. to-day, French Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that three iron-clads, under the command of a Rear-Admiral, have sailed for Smyrna, to be at hand in case of protection being needful for French citizens or other Christians in Turkey, and that a fourth went before for the same purpose to Salonica.

He says that the Italian Government has also sent three iron-clads to the Levant.

No. 240.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

Athens, January 28, 1878.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram of 27th, demonstration against late Ministers, and in favour of war, were attempted yesterday afternoon, but were prevented by the troops. Shots were exchanged, and some casualties occurred. Troops are still under arms, in case of further disturbances.

Demonstrations are said to have taken place at Patras and Syra.

No. 241.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, January 28, 1878.

(No. 75.)
My Lord,

I HAVE to instruct your Excellency to endeavour to ascertain what is the nature of the "ulterior understanding for safe-guarding the rights and interests of Russia in the Straits," which was mentioned in the bases of peace communicated to me by Count Schouvaloff on the 25th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 242.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Ragusa, January 18, 1878.*

I HAVE been informed that the Prince of Montenegro, having now taken Antivari, is advancing in the direction of the River Bojana.

Though the district about to be occupied by the Montenegrins can never, owing to its rocky nature, be of any material advantage, it is thought that the Prince, with the view to an armistice on the bases of *uti possidetis*, is occupying all the territory he can, and hopes thereby to establish a claim to a seaport, as well as to the much coveted district of Ljeschka Polje, situated between Spuz and Podgoritza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 243.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Ragusa, January 19, 1878.*

I HAVE again to report an instance where officials in Dalmatia have been infringing Austrian neutrality.

From reliable information I have received it appears that a vessel, flying Greek colours, is now landing at Budua munitions of war for Montenegro.

There is no doubt that if an investigation were made the officials in Dalmatia would deny the truth of such a statement; but, as I have already had the honour to report to your Lordship, the authorities in Dalmatia entertain the greatest sympathy for Montenegro, and, when an opportunity occurs, are always ready to assist their friends, and to participate in such acts by purposely keeping out of the way, or by turning a deaf ear when their attention is drawn to them.

The transport of arms across Austrian territory invariably takes place at night. When this object has been accomplished, the authorities, on being apprized, show the greatest activity, but arrive in time only to hear the cheers as the contrabands of war are being conveyed across the frontier.

I am told by eye-witnesses that on such occasions priests professing the Greek religion may be seen lending a helping hand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 244.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 28, 1878.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of to-day, I have received answer to-day from Imperial Government, in reply to my inquiries, that 15,000 Turkish sick and wounded found at Sophia have been taken charge of by General Gourko, but no special mention is made of Lady Strangford.

No. 245.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 130.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1878.*

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs from Gallipoli:—

"General Baker, with 4,000 troops and 500 artillery from Kara Gratz, just arrived. As many more expected in two days. Rejib and Suleiman are coming. General Baker then expects to go to Chakmedjé. All cannons were lost except mountain cannons."

No. 246.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1878.*

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from Mr. Green:—

"The Island of surrendered to the Montenegrins yesterday, and that of Lezendra has become untenable, and is to be evacuated.

"Insurrection of Miriditès is complete. Troops there surrounded, and those sent yesterday have found it prudent to halt at Micarti.

"Consequently orders for advance of Mahommedan tribes have now been repeated.

"Austrian influence and that of the clergy might obtain withdrawal in safety of the troops, but Austrian Consul hesitates to apply for instructions."

No. 247.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1878.*

GRAND VIZIER informs me that the advance of the Russians upon Tchataldja would increase number of fugitives and confusion and panic in Constantinople, but that Porte is taking every possible measure to preserve, if possible, public order and maintain tranquillity. Should the Russians succeed in advancing upon city it cannot answer for the consequences.

No. 248.

Consul Sir C. Scbright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(Telegraphic.) *Corfu, January 29, 1878.*

DEMAND received last night from Consul at Patras for naval aid. "Rapid," by permission of Admiral, left for (there?) this morning.

Have requested Commander of "Rapid" to visit south of island on return voyage.

Corfu quiet.

No. 249.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 2. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 29, 1878.*

I APPROVE your proceedings with a view to facilitate a settlement between the Cretan communities and the Commissioners sent by the Ottoman Government, as reported in your despatch No. 1, Political, of the 6th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 250.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, January 8, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reporting the reading of the orders at Beyrout affecting the creation of a Garde Civique.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 250.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, January 8, 1878.*

WITH reference to Mr. Vice-Consul Iago's despatch of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the orders and regulations affecting the creation of a Garde Civique were publicly read on the 29th ultimo at Beyrout, where this measure is, if possible, still more unpopular than at Damascus.

The Mussulmans appear to have received it with the apathy of indifference; while the subject is being actively discussed by the Christians, who are in no way inclined to consider this measure as a privilege accorded to them, but the reverse.

No steps, however, have as yet been taken by the authorities to put the regulation into execution, and it is very generally supposed that no such attempt will be made.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 251.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 4. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, January 12, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting the arrival from Constantinople of a number of Bulgarian prisoners in a pitiable plight, and the steps taken to relieve their distress, which I trust will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 251.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, January 12, 1878.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on the 27th ultimo eighty-six Bulgarian prisoners arrived at Beyrout by the Austrian Lloyd's steamer from Constantinople. The original number was eighty-seven, but one died during the passage and was buried at Cyprus. Of these eighty-six there were seventy-six destined for Acre, whom the authorities desired to forward to Caiffa by the same Austrian steamer which brought them to Beyrout, but the Captain refused to receive them on board.

Having heard of the arrival of these prisoners and of their probable departure for Acre, I telegraphed to the Consular Agent to report to me the state in which they reached that place, and on the following day when I learnt that they were still in Beyrout I sent to inquire whether they were fairly treated, and I was assured they were.

On the 30th ultimo those who were to be sent to Acre were forwarded overland, the weather at the time being unsettled and wet. Upon some of the prisoners stating that they did not feel strong enough to walk, the authorities provided them with ten pack-animals for those who were too feeble to perform the march on foot.

After proceeding about two hours from Beyrout one of the mounted escort returned to Beyrout to report that, owing to the heavy state of the road and the debility of some of the prisoners, more animals were required, and about twenty more were at once sent.

On arriving at a place called Khan Khaldi, about three hours from Beyrout, it became evident that five of the prisoners were seriously ill, and soon three of them expired. Upon this being reported to the authorities here orders were given for their interment, but it appears that the zaptiehs of the escort threw the bodies into an unused well, from which the authorities of Mount Lebanon, having heard of what had occurred, Khaldi being on Lebanon territory, caused them to be taken out of the well and decently buried.

On the arrival of the convoy of prisoners at Sidon on the following day, the other two who were ill died, and the rest remained two days in that town, where their arrival

and pitiable state having become known, the inhabitants, at the instigation of Mr. Vice-Consul Abela and his brothers, provided them with extra food and clothing, besides furnishing them with small sums of money for their wants on the way before they were sent on to Acre. One of the number complained of illness, was allowed to remain at Sidon, where he afterwards died.

The above facts came to my knowledge in a greatly exaggerated form during the day of the 4th instant, and having heard on the following morning that there were still at Beyrout three Bulgarians who were ill, whom Dr. Wortabet, the physician in charge of the Hospital of the Knights of St. John, proposed to receive into that establishment if the authorities would consent, I went at once to submit the proposal of Dr. Wortabet to his Excellency the Governor, from whom I learnt that there were ten prisoners still at Beyrout, who were destined for Damascus, but three of the number having complained of illness, he had detained the whole party till the sick were in a state to proceed.

Raef Effendi declined on his own responsibility to allow the sick Bulgarians to leave the prison for the Hospital of St. John, as he had already proposed to them the military hospital, which they had refused to enter, not, in my opinion, unnaturally. His Excellency, however, telegraphed at once to the Mushir and Acting Governor-General for his authorization to allow the sick men to be permitted to take advantage of the offer of Dr. Wortabet; at the same time he gave me permission to see the prisoners, and to let me to have them visited by a doctor of my own choice, as well as to afford them every reasonable assistance, taking into consideration their position as prisoners.

I consequently requested Dr. Wortabet to visit these men, and in the evening he reported to me that three were suffering from fever of various types, and that one he feared was so seriously ill that he might not recover.

The following morning, no reply having been received from the Mushir at Damascus, the prisoners were placed in a separate room, and five, who were found to be suffering, were, after a warm bath, provided with comfortable beds and bedding, and placed under the care of Dr. Wortabet, who charitably volunteered to take charge of them, so that now, with the kind permission of Raef Effendi, they are properly cared for till they are well enough to be forwarded to their destination, Damascus; and there is no longer any necessity for their being sent to the hospital, the Mushir having refused his consent to their going.

I took upon myself the responsibility of all expenses on this account, with the details of which I will not trouble your Excellency, as I felt quite certain that my fellow-countrymen and the inhabitants of Beyrout would help me should the expenses be more than I could afford, and I have not had reason to regret my confidence in the liberality of the people of Beyrout, who have already subscribed a sum amply sufficient to provide for the temporary wants not only of those who are at Beyrout, but to allow some assistance to be given to their comrades at Acre.

The ten Bulgarians who are at Beyrout being in comparative comfort, I return to the question of the unfortunate party, of whom six died on the road to Acre. During my interview with Raef Effendi, his Excellency assured me that he saw them before they started, and that not one of them complained of illness; but, as stated above, some said they were too feeble to perform the journey to Acre on foot, and animals were accordingly provided for them, and that had he known there were any sick amongst them, he would have detained them, in which statement, I believe, he was perfectly sincere, the proof of his sincerity being his having detained those destined for Damascus on learning that three were sick.

I pointed out to his Excellency that, however the case might be, the responsibility of the death of those who had perished on the road would fall upon him, and at the same time I accused myself for not having personally inspected them while they were at Beyrout, and, therefore, from a humanitarian point of view, a certain portion of the moral responsibility would rest upon me, although I was in no way officially charged with the welfare of these prisoners.

In the rumours which were circulated about the town it was said that the unfortunate men who were sent from Beyrout to Acre were heavily ironed and without clothing, beyond a rag over their shoulders; but I have carefully investigated this, and find the statement to be untrue. None, as far as I can learn, were in irons, one only is said to have had his hands tied with a rope attached to the horse of a mounted zaptieh, and some may have been indifferently clad, though, to judge by the ten whom I saw, I should be inclined to say that they were as well or better clothed, so far as I could gather from a rapid inspection, than most of the labouring classes on the sea coast of Syria, where from the mildness of the climate a pair of drawers and shirt of cotton, with a rough coat for winter, are considered ample protection from the cold. Most of them were clad in their

native costume; no doubt somewhat worn, and those whom I saw were greatly in want of under-clothing, having, as they stated, had no change for many months, and this has now been supplied to them.

I cannot speak too highly of the humane exertions of Dr. Wortabet on behalf of these poor prisoners, as, besides devoting himself to attend the sick, he has exerted himself in collecting money to provide them with a more nourishing diet, bedding, medical comforts, and such articles of clothing as they were most in need of. Dr. Wortabet is of opinion, in which I quite concur, that these poor men were reduced to a state of debility by a long imprisonment upon a lone diet, only about 2 lbs. of bread each man per diem, so that the privations they had undergone rendered them incapable of resisting the exposure of eight days on the deck of a steamer during their passage from Constantinople to Beyrout, and especially as at that time the weather was unusually severe, and must have told upon their already enfeebled constitutions, and caused them to be specially liable to fevers of various types, particularly that known as remittant or famine fever. The zaptiehs, or guards, who accompanied the Bulgarians from Constantinople to Beyrout, had on their arrival all to be sent to the military hospital, where I believe some still remain.

In justice, too, to Raef Effendi, I must say that his Excellency, on my putting the matter seriously before him, showed great regret at what had occurred, and displayed every disposition to assist us in aiding these men in misfortune. He has ordered an investigation to be made into the conduct of the zaptiehs who accompanied the prisoners to Acre, and has promised that should any charge of cruelty (which has been alleged) be proved, the guilty parties shall be seriously punished.

I have requested Mr. G. Abela, who is at Acre, watching the trial of the murderers of Mr. Gale, to visit the prisoners who have arrived there, and to afford them such aid in the way of clothing and food as they may stand in urgent need of, and at the same time I have written to the Mutaserif Zia Effendi requesting him to allow Mr. Abela to do so.

In taking the steps above reported to relieve the distress of the Bulgarian prisoners, I beg to assure your Excellency that I have acted from no other motive than the dictates of humanity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 252.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, January 13, 1878.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 72 of the 19th August last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch and its inclosures which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting the unsatisfactory state of the district of Akkar, in the Mutaserifiik of Tripoli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 252.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, January 13, 1878.*

IN my despatches of the 23rd July and 19th August last, I had the honour to bring to the notice of your Excellency the unsatisfactory state of affairs in the district of Akkar of the Mutaserifiik of Tripoli, and I have now the honour to transmit herewith an extract from a report which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, according to which it would seem that the condition of the unfortunate inhabitants has in no way improved, but rather become worse, owing to the violence and oppression of the Mussulman Chiefs, which the authorities appear powerless to repress.

In support of this, I inclose *précis* of the two documents mentioned in Mr. Blanche's report, also a *précis* of a petition which has been addressed to me by the priests of certain villages in a district adjoining Akkar, but depending on the Mutaserifiik of Hama, complaining of acts of violence and pillage committed by the Ansariych upon the inhabitants, to which Mr. Blanche alludes in a separate letter.

I have already brought these matters officiously to the notice of Izzet Pasha, the Acting Governor-General, but, engrossed as his Excellency is with his military duties as Mushir, I fear that my representations will not be likely to produce any beneficial result in the way of supporting the authority of Aziz Pasha, the Mutaserif of Tripoli, who seems anxious to do his duty, but requires the active support of the Vali to enable him to put an end to the disorders, and to cause the disturbers of the public peace to be punished.

Under these circumstances, I venture respectfully to suggest the propriety of your Excellency bringing these matters to the knowledge of the Ottoman Government, should you consider it advisable to do so, with a view to some energetic steps being taken to improve the existing state of affairs, and to ameliorate the condition of the unfortunate inhabitants of the unhappy district in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 252.

Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

(Extrait.) *Tripoli, le 27 Décembre*, 1877.

LES habitants du village d'Antoût, à Akkar, viennent de m'adresser une requête que j'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer ci-inclus. Il s'agit de violences exercées contre eux par des chefs de cette détestable aristocratie Musulmane qui règne dans ces régions.

Le cas paraît être d'une gravité exceptionnelle, car il y a meurtre et pillage; tous les bestiaux ont été enlevés, et c'est l'existence même du village qui est compromise. Ils ont une pièce de leur autorité, dont ci-inclus copie, qui vient à l'appui de leur réclamation. Malheureusement, les agresseurs dépendent du Mutaserifiat de Hama, et il s'agit de les amener dans la juridiction de Tripoli. Il faut à cet effet des ordres sévères du vilayet.

Je prends la liberté, M. le Consul-Général, de recommander les pauvres gens d'Akkar à votre sollicitude toute spéciale.

Inclosure 3 in No. 252.

Extract of Petition presented by the Inhabitants of the Village of Aindéfit to the British Vice-Consulate at Tripoli.

Le 20 Décembre, 1877.

LES pétitionnaires, Chrétiens du village d'Aindéfit, du Caza d'Akkar, se plaignent amèrement des fréquentes agressions, avanies, et actes de violence, tels que meurtre, brigandages, et enlèvement de bestiaux commis sur eux par les Aghas Beit-Hamoud-El-Danadishly, du Caza de Hosn, dépendant de Hamah, que les plaintes qu'ils ont faites à différentes reprises, tantôt aux autorités de Tripoli et tantôt à celles de Hamah, n'ont abouti à aucun résultat. Pour appuyer leurs griefs, ils annexent à leur requête la copie d'une lettre adressée à ce sujet par le Caïmacam d'Akkar au Mutasserif de Tripoli, et prient M. le Vice-Consul d'Angleterre à Tripoli de vouloir faire parvenir leurs plaintes à M. le Consul-Général d'Angleterre à Beyrouth, afin qu'il veuille bien prendre en considération la situation critique où ils sont réduits pour le seul motif de leur religion.

Suivent plusieurs signatures.

Inclosure 4 in No. 252.

Extract of Letter addressed by the Kaïmakam of Akkar to the Governor of Tripoli.

Le 7/8 Décembre, 1877.

LE Caïmacam d'Akkar transmet au Gouverneur de Tripoli une pétition qui lui a été présentée par les Chrétiens du village d'Aoukat, du Caza d'Akkar, par laquelle ils se plaignent des agressions et actes de violence des Aghas Abou Hamoud, du Caza de Hosn, et appuient leur plainte comme étant justement bien fondée, déclarant que les agressions des susdits Aghas deviennent si fréquentes que la sécurité des pétitionnaires est continuellement menacée.

Inclosure 5 in No. 252.

Petition addressed to Consul-General at Beyrout by Priests.

LES pétitionnaires reviennent sur leurs plaintes contre les attentats et méfaits de tout genre auxquels ils sont sujets de la part des Ansariyéhs, et qu'ils enduraient patiemment avec l'espoir que le Gouvernement finirait par prendre en considération leur sort, et prendrait telles mesures pour mettre fin à un tel état de choses qui vint de s'empirer cette année-ci, de sorte que leur sort devient insupportable.

Les Ansariyéhs s'étant ligués au nommé Mohamad Aga-El-Ahmed Danadishly, du Caza d'Akkar, ne s'imposent plus de frein, et en huit jours trois actes de violence inouïs ont été commis sur les Chrétiens.

Les malfaiteurs Ansariyéhs ont attaqué, la nuit, le village de Layssanié, les villageois endormis s'étant réveillés furent reçus à coups de feu. Dix villageois Chrétiens ont été blessés plus ou moins grièvement, ou dangereusement, et une femme Chrétienne a succombé à ses blessures; son cadavre a été l'objet d'une enquête de la part des autorités.

Une attaque pareille a été dirigée aussi contre le quartier Maronite du village de Mechta-Beit-el-Houlon; deux Chrétiens ont été assassiné et un autre grièvement blessé.

Issa Effendi Yagagi, notable Chrétien de Hosn, se trouvait dans son village de Bourge-Arabe quand il vit sa porte forcée la nuit par des gens appartenant à la suite de Mohamed Aga-el-Ahmed Dandechly, et auxquels s'étaient joints quelques malfaiteurs Ansariyéhs, avec le fameux brigand Salih Zahir, qui avait assassiné l'année passée, en plein jour, le nommé Khalil, fils de George Djemal. Issa Effendi, menacé par les malfaiteurs, a réussi à se dérober; un de ses gens a été dangereusement blessé, et trois juments de race lui appartenant ont été enlevées, ainsi qu'une besace appartenant à M. George-el-Sikaf, de Tripoli, qui se trouvait en ce moment son hôte, et qui contenait, à son dire, 10,000 piastres, somme qu'il venait de rembourser de ses débiteurs dans la Caza de Markal.

Les pétitionnaires, en citant ces faits, entre autres, s'appuient sur le danger continuel qui menace leurs jours, et sollicitent la protection bienveillante du Consul-Général de Sa Majesté Britannique, afin que des mesures soient prises en vue de leur inspirer la confiance et la sécurité nécessaires pour leur vie et leurs biens, autrement ils ne trouvraient de mieux à faire que d'émigrer pour jouir de la sécurité qu'ils convoitent.

Suivent les signatures et cachets de treize curés de différents villages des deux districts de Hosn et de Safita.

Le 29 Novembre, 1877.

No. 253.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(No. 6. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, January* 17, 1878.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting further on the condition of the Bulgarians who were recently sent from Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 253.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, January* 17, 1878.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 12th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the ten Bulgarians who remained at Beyrout are doing well, and are being provided for by the generosity of the charitably-disposed persons of this town. There are, however, still some amongst them suffering from fevers, and the rest are in such an enfeebled condition that some time must elapse before they are in a fit state to proceed to Damascus.

The tale of the 76 who were sent to Acre is extremely sad. In my former despatch 6 are already accounted for up to Sidon by their deaths. Of the 70 who left Sidon, 4 either died on the road, or on their arrival at Tyre, and 4 were left in that town ill, who, I have just learnt, have since died.

Of the remaining 62, one died on the road before reaching Acre, 3 immediately after their arrival, and 1 a few days afterwards, so that out of the 76 sent from Beyrout on the 30th ultimo, only 57 remain, and of these, according to a telegram received two days ago, 50 are seriously ill, but they are now at least being cared for, the Mutaserif of Acre having allowed them to be transported to the Greek convent, where they are attended by the doctors of the place, and the inhabitants have supplied them with articles of the first necessity in the way of food, clothing, medicines, &c.

In Beyrout a committee has been formed to collect funds for these unfortunate men, and the Agent at Acre of the committee has been authorized to expend at once 50*l.* for their benefit according to his own judgment, as it appears certain that the amount collected at Beyrout will be greatly in excess of that sum.

It is currently reported that these unhappy dying men were brutally illtreated on the road by the zaptiehs who were in charge of them, and that more than one died either under the blows he received or from the effects of them; but this report I have not as yet been able to verify, and I am loath to believe that such fiends can exist who would illtreat or strike dying men. The whole matter requires investigation, and if the reports in circulation are true, deliberate murder has been committed, and the guilty persons ought to be punished for their crimes.

I cannot cease to reproach myself for having permitted these unfortunate men to leave Beyrout without having first caused them to be carefully inspected by a medical man, which would in all probability have led to their being detained here until they were in a fit state to be forwarded on to Acre, and by which it is likely many lives would have been saved, and I belief the Mutaserif, Raif Effendi, equally reproaches himself for having sent them in the state they were, which he assures me was unknown to him.

It appears now that these Bulgarians were not condemned to prison, but were simply sent into exile as suspected and dangerous persons, which would make the treatment they have received and their consequent sufferings all the more reprehensible, and greatly increase the responsibility of the authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 254.

Memorandum by Ivancho Tougoroff, Pastor of the First Bulgarian Protestant Church at Bansko, Samokor, Macedonia.—(*Received January* 30.)

THE sufferings of the Protestant people in Bulgaria, at the hands of the Greek Church authorities, have been very great for years past, and now are, and no confidence should on any account be placed in the promises of the said Church, but a clause should be inserted in the Treaty with the European Powers to secure full liberty of worship to Protestants and Dissenters from the Greek Church.

2. The spirit of cruelty, oppression, and superstition of the Greek Church in Bulgaria, is as great as that of the Romish Church at the time of the Reformation in England.

3. I was myself more than once imprisoned at the instigation of the Greek Church authorities; and last year my life would have been taken had not it been for the active interference of Mr. J. Blunt, the English Consul at Salonica.

4. The Mahomedan Government officers when uninfluenced allow us full religious liberty, and permitted us to have the quiet use of the Lord's Day, and in some cases have even suspended collecting taxes, being told that we transacted no secular business on that day.

5. Much of the sufferings of the poor Bulgarians has been from the rich members of the Greek Church, together with the Turkish tax-gatherers and Governors who, for their own unjust profit, unite together and plunder the people.

6. Before the war began, the Protestants were threatened by the members of the Greek Church that as soon as Russia comes they will be skinned alive, and letters of last week inform us that the persecutions have begun already.

7. The Protestant ministers and people in Bulgaria dreaded the approach of the Russian authority, joined as it is to the dark, cruel, and superstitious Greek Church, and at the approach of the Bashi-Bazouks, some of the men dared not flee with the Russians

for safety, but remained and were massacred by the Bashi-Bazouks in their place of worship.

8. Lastly, I am prepared to make a statutary declaration of the correctness and truthfulness of the above statements.

(Signed) IVANCHO TOUGOROFF.

96, *Mildmay Road, N., January* 17, 1878.

No. 255.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(No. 8. Political.)

My Lord, *Odessa, January* 24, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to report that Mr. Vice-Consul Moffat, under date of 16th instant, writes to me regarding the movements of Turkish war ships off the Crimean coast, as follows :—

"On the morning of the 10th instant an iron-clad appeared off Sebastopol. On the 11th instant Eupatoria was bombarded by two iron-clads. I am informed that the Turks fired 138 rounds, and that seven persons were killed or injured in the town. On the 12th two iron-clads appeared off Yalta. They remained almost stationary about eight miles off for several hours, and at sunset they moved away to the westward. On the 13th, two iron-clads bombarded Theodosia.

"The following is the substance of a telegram published at Simpheropol :—

"'January $\frac{3}{4}$.—Yesterday, at 10·30, two ironclads approached Theodosia and bombarded the town for about three hours. The enemy fired as many as 132 rounds, after which one of the iron-clads stood out to sea and the other also left the roadstead to repair. Twelve houses were damaged, one soldier was killed, two wounded, and six contused. Seven of the inhabitants were wounded. On the following morning the vessels stood out in a westerly direction. On the 15th an iron-clad was off Yalta from daybreak till the afternoon.'

"It is to be remembered that, on the occasion of the first bombardment of Eupatoria last autumn, the garrison, in attempting the rescue of a merchant-vessel, were the first to open fire.

"It is stated, though I cannot speak positively to the fact, that the bombardment of the 11th and 13th instant took place under similar circumstances, the garrison being the first to fire. Both at Eupatoria and Theodosia field batteries are stationed.

"The vessels that are at present visiting the coast of the Crimea are, I believe, in hopes of meeting with the cruizers from Sebastopol. Increased vigilance has evidently ensued from the recent capture of the 'Mersina.'

"It is not, therefore, unlikely that those places on the coast where there is no artillery to challenge attack will remain unmolested.

"Two iron-clads passed Yalta from west to east this morning, and one has been seen for several hours off Alupka."

The above letter, though written on the 16th, was only received by me to-day. Since it was written, Anapa, on the Circassian coast, has been bombarded.

As all these places are more or less fortified, they would appear to be legitimate objects for attack.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

No. 256.

Colonel Maude to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(No. 2.)

My Lord, *Warsaw, January* 27, 1878.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that during past week all the reserves in the Kingdom of Poland have been called in, and as fast as they come in they are sent to complete the cadres in the interor of the Empire. At the same time the reserves from Russia are being brought here for the completion of the regiments. The four fortresses of the kingdom have been quite lately put into a state of defence, their garrisons having been increased and large additions made to their stores of ammunition.

The 6th infantry division of four regiments has lately come in from the military district of Vilna.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. C. MAUDE.

No. 257.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(No. 71.)

My Lord, *Paris, January* 28, 1878.

I HAD to-day the honour to inform your Lordship by telegraph that Her Majesty's Consul at Marseilles reported that four ships-of-war had left Toulon for the Levant.

I took an opportunity this afternoon of asking M. Waddington for some information on the subject. He told me that in fact four iron-clads had been sent to Turkish waters in order that they might be at hand to give protection, in case of need, to French citizens, as well as to other Europeans who might be exposed to danger, in case of troubles in Turkey.

M. Waddington said that one of these vessels, the "Héroine," had sailed a day or two before for Salonica, and that the three others had just set out for Smyrna, under the command of a Rear-Admiral.

M. Waddington did not at the moment recall the names of the three others. They are stated in a newspaper to be the "Gauloise," the "Guienne," and the "Couronne."

All four are stated to be iron-clads of the first class.

M. Waddington told me that the Italian Government had also sent three iron-clads to the Levant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 258.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.) *Bucharest, January* 30, 1878.

IT is reported to me that three Russian army corps are to enter this country and be stationed in positions commanding Austrian frontier.

No. 259.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, January* 30, 1878.

BANDS of volunteers under Greek officers are reported to be continually leaving Greece for Thessaly to foment disturbances there.

No. 260.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 30.)

(No. 134.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 30, 1878.

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs from Gallipoli to-day :—

"Reggib Pasha, with 4,200 men, just arrived. Number of troops arrived yesterday and to-day rather less than reported. Including them, army of Suleiman and Shakir now numbers 35,000 men, with some mountain batteries. General Baker just starting for Constantinople."

No. 261.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 30, 1878, 4·30 P.M.

A QUESTION will be asked in the House of Commons to-morrow as to the approximate number of persons at Constantinople who are entitled to the protection of Great Britain.

Can you send an answer by telegraph?

No. 262.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 30, 1878, 5·30 P.M.

CAN you inform Her Majesty's Government where the Turkish fleet is?

No. 263.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 134.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 30, 1878.

I HAVE to request your Excellency to ascertain, if possible, wnat is the approximate number of persons at Constantinople who are entitled to British protection.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 264.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 7. Political.)

My Lord, *Ragusa, January* 22, 1878.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 5 of the 18th instant, relative to Montenegrin military movements in Albania, I have the honour to report that the Prince of Montenegro has now extended his line of operations to the River Bojana.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 265.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 137.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 30, 1878.

I LEARN on good authority that it is the intention of the Greek Government to send troops to occupy provinces of Thessaly and Epirus before the conclusion of peace.

No news from the Plenipotentiaries, who are believed to be at Adrianople. Russians continue to advance on all sides.

No. 266.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 138.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 30, 1878.

MILITARY ATTACHÉ at Gallipoli reports that telegraph clerk at Dédéagatch reports at 3 P.M. yesterday afternoon:—

"We are leaving; Russians arriving here. Ferejik, I hear, occupied."

Consul here says that Russians may perhaps find there enough boats for 5,000 (?)

men, and same at Enos; also ships there accidentally, or steamers by arrangement. Sea shall be watched.

No. 267.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

St. Petersburgh, January 31, 1878.

(Telegraphic.) OFFICIAL telegram from Grand Duke Nicholas, dated Adrianople, Saturday evening, January 26, 9 P.M., announces his arrival there that day from Hermanli by rail; found Infantry and Artillery of Guard in splendid condition; was received with much enthusiasm by population. Advanced guard have occupied Kirkilissa, Baba-Eski, and Demotika.

Telegram from Cesarewitch, dated Brestowatz, Wednesday, January 29, announces occupation of Osman-Bazar and Rasgrad. Turks are everywhere withdrawing to their fortresses.

No. 268.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 3.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 31, 1878.

I APPROVE your proceedings, as reported in your despatch No. 5, Political, of the 14th instant, with a view to bring about an understanding between the Turkish Commissioners and the Cretan population.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. February 1878.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(3508.)

PART XXI.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

January 1878.